NEERAJ ATRI
MUNIESHWER A SAGAR

Brainwashed Republic

INDIA'S CONTROLLED SYSTEMIC DERACINATION

Foreword by
Subramanian Swami

BRAINWASHED REPUBLIC BRAI NWASHED REPUBLI C

Neeraj Atri
MunieshwerA Sagar

FOREWORDBY
Dr. Subramanian Swamy [Rajya Sabha MP]

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FOREWORD

The history needs to be rewritten so that young generation gets rid of their low self-esteem imposed through distorted history, if India has to emerge as powerful nation in the next couple of decades. The process has to begin from removing the distortions in historybooks, which have been deliberately foistered on the students.
India could emerge as a strong economy since 70 per cent of its population is under 35 years of age. If the Government invested in their education and health, apart from making them mentally strong, India could emerge as a strong nation.

The Indian State instead of the encouraging objective rendering of the history have encouraged few vested interests to hijack the historical narrative. This has resulted in present situation where the history, which is taught in our schools and colleges, is the British imperialist-sponsored one, with the intent to destroy our history.

The defalsified history would record that Hindustan was one nation in the art of governance, in the style of royal courts, in the methods of warfare, in the maintenance of its agrarian base, and in the dissemination of information. Sanskrit was the language of national communication and discourse. But under the leadership of Jawahar Lal Nehru, after achieving independence, the corrections in history were never done and I have mentioned this in details in my book "Hindus Under Siege: The Way Out"

The gist of this British imperialist-tailored Indian history is that India is portrayed as the land "conquered" first by the 'Dravidians', then by the 'Aryans', later by Muslims, and finally by the British. Otherwise, everything else is mythical. Our history books today exhibit this obsession with foreign rule. For example, even though the Mughal rule fromAkbar to Aurangzeb is about 150 years, which is much shorter than the 350 year rule of the Vijayanagaram empire, the history books of today hardly take notice of the latter. In fact the territory under Krishna Devaraya's rule was much larger than Akbar's, and yet it is the latter who is called "the Great". Such a version suited the British rules who had sought to create a legitimacy for their presence in India.

Furthermore, we were also made to see advantages accruing from British rule, the primary one being that India was united by this colonialism, and that but for the British, India would never have been one country. Thus, the concept of India itself is owed to the plunder of colonists.

The Hindus capitulated to Islamic invaders, has been mentioned in the falsified history. But on the contrary, unlike Iran, Iraq and Egypt where within decades the country capitulated to become 100% Muslims. India despite 800 years of brutal Islamic rule, remained 80% Hindu.

The agenda for National Renaissance has to be a new factual account of our history, focusing on the continuous and unbroken endeavours of a people united as a nation. This history of India must deal with the conscious effort of our people to achieve a civilization, to reach better standards of life, and live a happier and nobler life. Although the lamp of faith of the Indian people burnt brightly in long periods, this history must also record when that faith dimmed and brought shame to the people. The factual account of our past is essential to the agenda, because we have to objectively disgorge and discard the foreign versions of our history. It is this foreign version that makes us out to be foreigners in our own land. The Aryan-Dravidian divide in the history taught in schools and universities is purely a conception of foreign historians like Max Mueller and has no basis in Indian historical records or in any genetic studies of Indian DNA.

An accurate history should not only record the periods of glory but the moments of degeneration, of the missed opportunities, and of the failure to forge national unity at crucial junctures in time. It should draw lessons for the future generations from costly errors in the past.

The authors of this book have done a commendable job in not only highlighting the malady but also presenting the facts to do so, in this well researched book. It is disturbing to read the amount of intellectual investment that has been made by the forces that are inimical to our country. These forces have penetrated into our democratic institutions to hollow them from inside. My experience is that such insidious forces can never be defeated by rhetoric. Mere sloganeering is of no use in academic and judicial domain.

The present work brings to fore the impunity with which NCERT was compromised during UPA regime. During both the terms of the ousted alliance, history has been totally rewritten to serve the purpose of divisive forces, which are trying to uproot Hindu ethos of the country. Young and impressionable minds of the children are being hijacked to be more prone to accept the narrative of breaking India forces.

It is high time the history text books are rewritten with clear directions to the historians that the narrative of our country should be depicted with honesty. Our nation's past is full of cultural, social, economic and scientific achievements. The current history text books not only undermine the achievements but instead burden the country's children with inferiority complex and hatred for each other. The social dissonance that these books create should be rectified.

This book is valuable for historians and researchers in the field of history. The book presents in a step by step way historical facts juxtaposed with the lies in the current history text books. The book is honest and unique effort in preparing this compilation which is very useful and handy for all the relevant information and needs to be lauded.

The policy makers including the bureaucrats and the politicians should also go through this book in order to realize the problem, and also getting clues of how to rectify these issues.
The current NDA government is committed to look afresh the issue of history writing. This book can be certainly an important one for such an endeavour.

Dr. Subramanian Swamy [Rajya Sabha MP]

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INTRODUCTION

History is important. If you don't know history it is as if you were born yesterday. And if you were born yesterday, anybody up there in a position of power can tell you anything, and you have no way of checking up on it.

Howard Zinn

It is very sad that the spirit of perverting history to suit political views is no longer confined to politicians, but has definitely spread even among professional historians.

R.C.Majumdar
T

he children of our country are being lied to. Millions of impressionable young minds are being trained to hate, loathe and despise upon their ancestors, culture and country. Seeds of mutual suspicion are being sown in their minds. Caste, geography, religion, gender and all other social and cultural markers are being used to cast our children into mutually antagonistic identities. Our children's mind space is the battleground where

the enemy, from within, is staging an uncontested victory, and destroying us without us even realising the existence of this belligerent front.

This war is being fought through lies. These lies are being presented as history through textbooks that are compulsory for students. The NCERT history textbooks, read and internalised by millions of children every year, are supposed to be the product of the highest academic qualityand honesty. But in this case, the 'expert historian' has been quietly replaced by a propagandist. The propagandist unashamedly plays havoc with our history. Instead of facts, he uses all the propaganda techniques in creating a fiction, which he then passes on to our children as the 'authoritative' history sanctioned by the Indian State. The principal technique used in these NCERT history textbooks is to lie and lie big. Instead of teaching historical assertions based on facts, this propagandist tries to create a picture of our past based on hearsay, conjectures and obviously, outright lies. The NCERT history writers showcase their masterful skills in using propaganda techniques like ad nauseam: appeal to authority, appeal to prejudice, bandwagon, big lie, cherry picking, classical conditioning, disinformation, euphemism, exaggeration, glittering generalities, guilt by association, half-truths, intentional vagueness, labelling, loaded language, oversimplification, testimonial, third party technique, unstated assumption, thought-terminating cliché, and transfer or association.And, the target of this seasoned propagandist is an innocent and trustful child. This child must read these books cover to cover; remember the 'facts'; appear in examinations based on these; and in the process internalise the contents as the true depiction of our past and culture. For seven years- from class VI to class XII, which are also the most impressionable years of a child's schooling- this conditioning takes place.

The objective of this book is to expose these lies. In every instance mentioned in this book, we juxtapose the NCERT history and the historical facts. Unlike the speculation and conjecture-driven NCERT history writing, our endeavor is to, in each and every instance, give the actual and original historical text and reference.

Errors by design

Books, like any other human creation, are susceptible to errors due to the fallibilityof humans. Modern science accepts this shortcoming ofhumanbeings and has consequentlydesigned methods tominimise the possibility of errors during experiments. One of the most widely accepted methods is making a large number of calculations and then using the average value to be the true value of the quantity to be measured. The basic assumption behind this method is that errors are random in nature, that is, for a large number of values, if a few experimenters err on the positive side then there will be some who will err on the negative side. Therefore, when a large number of such values are averaged, the errors of the opposite sides will cancel out each other.

Had the distortions of NCERT books been of the same random nature, there would have been no need to write this book. The scrutiny of the entire content, from class 6^{th} to class 12^{th}, shows that the version of history being presented in these books is tilted heavilyagainst one side: of India's ancient heritage, religion, culture, social leaders, scriptures and even its language. Earlier, whenever there was a hue and cry regarding distortions in history books, it pertained to something spectacular or sensational like 'Bhagat Singh was a terrorist'. Such distortions are easy to spot and easier to get rectified through judicial process. At the same time, suchinstances highlight that there are individuals and institutions that have a vested interest in presenting a biased version of history to the students of our country. The distortions in the present history books are not spectacular, but insidious. Like most people, we held the general impression that NCERT, a reputable educational and academic institution, entrusted with the important task of writing the history textbooks would work in a non-partisan and diligent manner. It is an unstated assumption that the best brains of the country are chosen and paid out of tax payers' money to do a thorough and honest job of history writing. Primarily, it was this impression that made it difficult to point an accusing finger on a prestigious institution. When inconsistencies were found in the history textbooks, it was assumed that the assertions of NCERT are correct and doubts regarding their truthfulness, in all probability, are just doubts. To be doubly sure, applications were filed under RTI (Right to Information) Act, in which copies of original documents and evidences were sought from the Department of Social Sciences of the NCERT. More

than 100 RTI applications were submitted to the Council, seeking documentary proof for their assertions. Surprisingly, response to all the applications was that the NCERT did not possess any records or evidences on the basis of which the books have been written. We were not sure about the reason for this stonewalling by the NCERT. It could have been due to typical bureaucratic lethargy or arrogance. Or, was it that we were asking uncomfortable questions? To find this out, it was decided to compare the contents of history textbooks with actual historical records. Shockingly, the gaps between the both were appalling, and too numerous to be ignored. When these anomalies were brought to the notice of the Council through representations, no one bothered to respond.As the research went deeper and wider, a pattern started emerging that indicated that the distortions are neither random nor unintentional. Every lie, distortion, speculation, and conjecture that the NCERT authors employ in manufacturing the Indian history has a well-designed objective. It builds a false narrative for the gullible students to absorb and imbibe in their psyche. The message, though subtle and executed bymasters of deception, is yet very clear. It depicts an Indian society, culture and religions drenched in misogyny, discrimination, cruelty, imperialism, inequalityand superstition. India is shownas a disjointed and artificial entity consisting of historically antagonistic social and cultural entities.

The gravest victim of this malicious NCERT propaganda isAncient India. Its social structure and scriptures are depicted as primitive, exploitative, misogynist, regressive and inhuman. All the pillars on which the Indian civilization has survived and thrived have been systematicallydelegitimised, underplayed and pilloried.Toundermine the grand narrative of India, its language, scriptures, intellectuals, kings and heritage have been derided byunbridled use of propaganda tools.

In contrast to the Indian heritage, foreign invaders and their religions are presented in glowing terms; and again, this is done in contravention of genuine historical records or factual analysis. Instead of a realistic and balanced view of the interactions between the indigenous and foreign cultures, the NCERT authors expunge contribution of the Indic society from records. They posit Indic culture and religion as subservient and inferior to the imperialistic foreign rulers'. NCERT authors'lies force our children to internalise that if ever anything good happened in the country or if it ever

achieved anything positive, it was all a contribution of foreigners. In fact, foreign invaders who were responsible for unmitigated miseryon our ancestors have been depicted as redeemers of society. In several instances where the NCERT authors don't employ lies or conjectures or speculation, their tone and slant does the trick. **The underlying pattern**
In this book a sincere effort has been made not only to catalogue the NCERT's lies and distortions, but also share with readers the underlying patterns and message of NCERT history textbooks. The defining characteristic of the current set of NCERT historytextbooks is their underlying messages, patterns and themes running throughout the content. The purpose of which a believing mind may not be able to discern. The structure of this book is weaved around exposing these messages, patterns and themes.
To present these findings, we have divided the content into eight chapters. These chapters are not watertight compartments as many passages in the NCERT books have content that simultaneously targets more than one aspect of India's past.

Chapter 1 – **Breaking the Geographical Contiguity** In this chapter, many subtle propaganda techniques used by the NCERT are highlighted. These techniques are used to create a perception that India has been just a geographical region with no unity underpinning its existence. We focus on how the NCERT employs outright lies, quoting historical personalities out of context and selective portrayals of historical events. It is done to indoctrinate the children into believing that India is an artificial construct, created only recently. We unwrap, step by step, the historical facts and examine original historical writings, which the NCERT has quoted selectively and also out of context.

Chapter 2 – **Uprooting the linguistic heritage**
The attack on Sanskrit language is pervasive in all the NCERT history textbooks, but it is very subtle. In this attack, the NCERT authors have primarily employed the propaganda technique of Association. Each and every time the Council authors mention Sanskrit in the textbooks it is associated with a negative concept like misogyny, colonialism, exploitationand inequality. It is presented as a language of colonialists

imposed on the natives and local languages. It is shown as an exclusivist language, used byBrahmans for exploiting the 'natives'.

Chapter 3 – **Breaking the civilizational contiguity** The Aryan Invasion Theory (AIT), manufactured by the British in 18th century, is the bedrock on which the antagonistic divisions in the Indian society are created and in which the divisive identity politics takes roots. The AIT has been dumped even by most of its former vociferous supporters. But, the NCERT authors insert the AIT in the textbooks and base several other of their historical narratives on the AIT. These authors at no place directly outline or explain the AIT; instead, they either selectively quote individuals from the 18th and the 19th centuries (primarily, social activists sponsored or supported by British at the time) or build a historical narrative, which pre-supposes the AIT. The children are forced to assume and accept that an 'Aryan' invasion took place at some point of time in our history. We examine such insertions in the light of the latest scientific discoveries in the field.

Chapter 4 – **Distorting the legacy**
The NCERT history writers attack all Indic scriptures and literature like Ved, Mahabharat, and Ramayan. The two epics —Ramayan and Mahabharat— are trivialised, their message ridiculed and their authenticity rebuffed. But, the severest NCERT attack is on the Vedic corpus. It is presented as an imperialistic tool in the hands of Brahmans to demean and disenfranchise the native population. We examine the actual Vedic texts to find out whether the NCERT propaganda can stand the test of facts.
All the virtues of the Indic civilization are transplanted as invaders' attributes. The viciousness and exploitative nature of foreign rulers, and the creeds they subscribe to, are passed off as innate depravity of the Indic culture. For instance, slavery, which is institutionalised inAbrahamic religions, is presented as an intrinsic trait of ancient India.

Chapter 5 – **The wicked Indian kings and the emancipating invaders**
The contrasting portrayalof Indic kings and foreign rulers in different periods of Indian history is a stark example of the NCERT history writers' bias for anything Indian. Ignoring facts, and the large corpus of authentic historical texts, these writers, first, omit most of the Indian kings from their

pages and next, present them as warmongers, always busy in destroying each other. Following this narrative, NCERT history writers then present the foreign invaders, primarily the Muslim Turkic and Mughal regimes, as benevolent and just. Indian kingdoms spread over large areas and time period are reduced to a mere footnote in history, while smaller foreign kingdoms, sometimes eventhose limited toa cityor a single individual, are presented as empires. These writers club several foreign rulers, whose rule individually lasted for an average of 10-20 years, into one Sultanate period.

Chapter 6 – **Indic traditions oppress women**
Indic traditions celebrate a supreme power that is Ardhnarishwar, and the same cosmology permeates the worldly relations. 'Ardhangini' captures the essence of Indic view about women. This tradition envisages men and women as complimentary, and not competitors. This approach can offer a pragmatic alternative to the current confrontational discourse on feminism. Yet, the NCERT authors portray Indic traditions to be misogynist.

Chapter 7 – **Dividing population into hostile groups** The message to the children is very clear and is repeated again and again – India comprises several antagonistic social groups classified in terms of tribes, castes, races and classes. All these different social groups have always been at war with each other. In doing this, NCERT history writers reverse the actual historical narrative where the local social groups have always come together to defeat the foreign imperialistic powers. The contribution of different social groups in standing up to aggressive and exclusivist foreign cultures is totally ignored by the NCERT writers.

Chapter 8 – **The Evil Brahmans**
The NCERT historical narrative castigates 'upper castes', especially Brahmans, as the diabolical villain of the Indian history. They, in league with Kshatriyas, are painted as progenitors of the discriminatorycaste system, womenvictimisation, culturalhegemony and marginalisation of the different sections of Indian society. In this chapter we examine whether the historical facts substantiate NCERT authors' vilification of Brahmans. We discover that the NCERT authors are merely following the colonial practice of

demonising the Brahman, and making sweeping generalisations against a social group without any factual basis in history.

What about errors of omission

Writing history books of a nation like India, which has millennia-old existence as an entity, is a tough job. It becomes tougher when we take into account the vastness and pluralityof the country. However, that cannot be an excuse for shoddy history writing or a version of history that negates the predominant historical, social and cultural ethos.Anation's history is supposed to be weaved around its grand narrative. It does include subgroups and different sections of the nation, but these are always included in the composite historyrather than presented as divisive elements having distinct pasts. The current NCERT books present a version that is antithetical to it. What is included in history textbooks is as important as what is excluded. Since this book is aimed at unraveling the NCERT narrative, we are forced to draw the attention of the readers towards only those errors that have been committed by NCERT authors. Thus the errors of commission have been discussed whereas the errors of omission have been left out although they are far more numerous than the former.

Prism of Religion

Another effect of this limitation is the disproportionate emphasis on religion. The NCERT books are designed through the prism of religion; whether discussing socio-cultural aspects or the behaviour of the rulers. As a result, secular aspects take a back seat and the overarching narrative is weaved around religion.

In a sense, these books not only contravene the ethical code of historians, but also run counter to the constitution of India. The constitution talks of 'Unity and integrity of the Nation' and emphasises on 'harmony and the spirit of common brotherhood amongst all the people of India, transcending religious, linguistic and regional diversities'. Unfortunately, in the NCERT books the message is diametrically opposite, contradicting not only the historical facts, but also the ideals enshrined in the Constitution. It will be appropriate to say that the contents of this book are dictated by the content of NCERT history books.

CHAPTER 1 Breaking the Geographical Contiguity

The indigenous sources, as well as, foreign authors – Megasthenes from Greece, Xuan Zang(Heun Tsang) and Faxian(Fa Hein) from China, Al-Beruni and Amir Khusro of central Asian origin and many others – all have left historical records that testify the underlying and unbroken cultural and geographical unity of India – from Himalayas to the Indian Ocean.

Yet, the NCERT books invert this very unity by fabricating a narrative in which India is presented as a land mass having no cultural or historical moorings.

O

ne way of imparting self-confidence and a sense of belonging in the citizens of a countryis educating them about the antiquity of their traditions and heritage. Survival of an old civilization along with its customs as well as traditions is an indicator of the robustness with which it has withstood the rigorous test of time. That is why academicians, all over the world, try to design history books that glorify the past of their nation and their ancestors. It may seem ludicrous but even a recently carved political entity like Pakistan tries to portray itself as a centuries-old continuous civilization. Fortunately for us, our historians do not have to manufacture such a fictitious history. That is a benefit of being a truly old civilization. But ironically, the NCERT authors are trying to manufacture a past for our country that creates a perception as if it was never a united entityin the bygone times. The following passage will give the reader an idea of the picture being presented to our children:

Take the term 'Hindustan', for example, todaywe understand it as 'India', the modern nation – state. When the term was used in the thirteenth century by Minhaj-i- Siraj, a chronicler who wrote in Persian, he meant the areas of Punjab, Haryana and the lands between the Ganga and the Yamuna. He used the term in a political sense for lands that were a part of the dominions of the Delhi Sultan. The areas included in this term shifted with the extent of the Sultanate but *the term never included south India*. By contrast, in the early

sixteenth century Babur used Hindustan to describe the geography, the fauna and the culture of the inhabitants of the subcontinent. As we will see later in the chapter, this was somewhat similar to the way the fourteenth century poet Amir Khusrau used the word Hind. While the idea of a geographical and cultural entity like India did exist, *the term Hindustan did not carry the political and national meanings* which we associate with it today.

NCERT, class 7th p 3

If we look at indigenous sources, which include epics (Ramayan and Mahabharat), Manusmriti or writings of Kalidas, all of them tell us that the boundaries of India stretch all the way to the Indian Ocean. Foreign authors, from Megasthenes toAmir Khusro, have left historical records that testify that the southern boundary of India is the IndianOcean, therebyestablishing that 'southIndia' has always been a part of Hindustan. It was only during the colonial period that the missionaries and administrators formed a nexus to present India as a fragmented entity. Since the nineteenth century, evangelists have been trying to delink Tamil culture from Hindu culture by projecting a North-South divide. The same colonial construct has found its way back into our history textbooks introduced in 2006. Before delving further into these artificial constructs, let us look at the historical records:

On the west the boundaries of India are marked by the river Indus all the way to the great ocean into which it pours its waters, which it does by two mouths. These mouths are not close to each other, like the five mouths of Ister (Danube), but diverge like those of Nile, by which the Egyptian delta is formed. The Indus in like manner makes an Indian delta, which is not inferior to the Egyptian and is called in the Indian tongue Pattala. On the South West again, and on the south, India is bounded by the great ocean just mentioned, which also forms its boundaries on the east[1].

The above passage was written by Megasthenes about 2,500 years ago. About 1,500 years after him came Al-Beruni, who was a chronicler of Mahmud Ghaznavi, the notorious invader and brigand. Al-Beruni wrote his work on India to provide, in his own words, "the essential facts for any

Muslim who wanted to converse with Hindus and to discuss with them questions of religion, science, or literature."

Al-Berunitravelled inIndia for thirteenyears, observing, questioning, and studying society and its socio-cultural aspects. The result was a comprehensive exposition of Indian thought and society. He has given a detailed description of the boundaries of India in his 'Kitab al Hind'. They match the boundary mentioned by Megasthenes.

Here however, we are concerned only with that part of the sea which is bordered by the continent of India, and therefore is called the Indian Ocean.

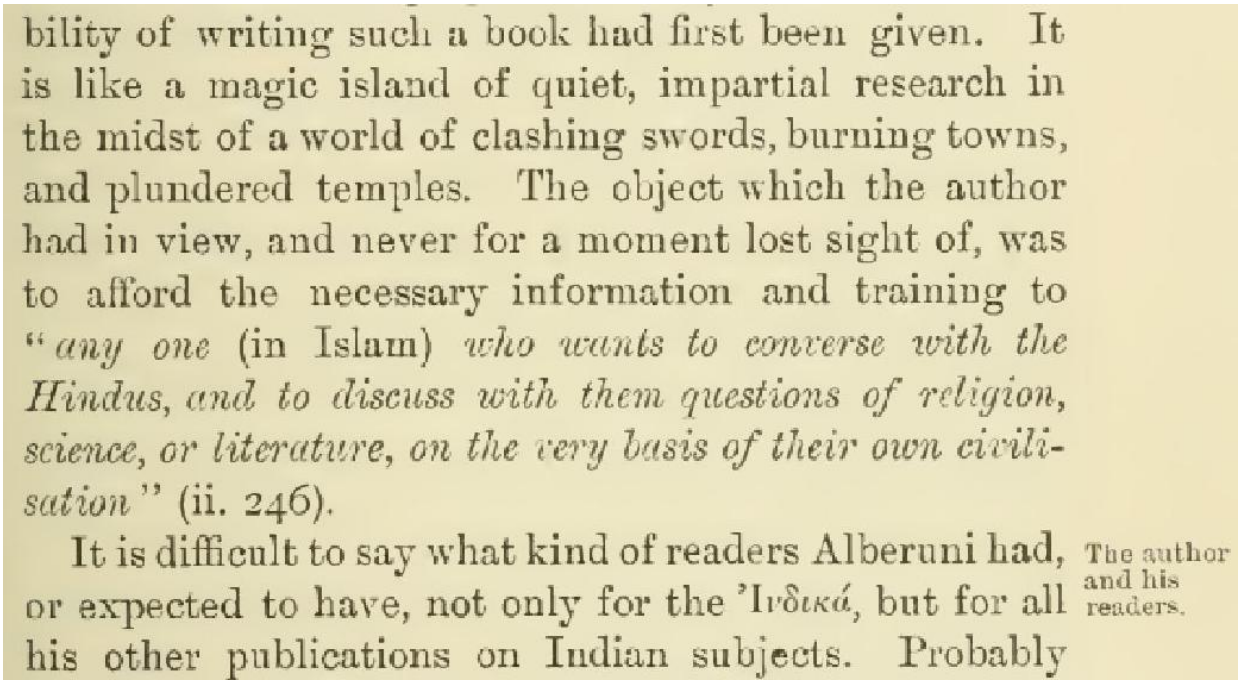
[1] (Ancient India as described by Megasthenes and Arrian, p. 183)

As to the orographic configuration of the inhabitable world imagine a range of towering mountains like the vertebrae of a pine stretching through the middle latitude of the earth, and in longitude from east to west, passing through China, Tibet, the country of the Turks, Kabul, Badhakhshan, Tokharistan, Bamiyan, Elghor, Khurasan, Media, Adharbaijan,Armenia, the Roman Empire, the country of the Franks, and of the Jalalika (Gallicians). Long as this range is, it has also a considerable breadth, and, besides, many windings which enclose inhabited plains watered by streams which descend from the mountains both towards north and south. One of these plains is India, limited in the south by the abovementioned Indian Ocean, and on all three other sides by the lofty mountains, the waters of which flow down to it.

The middle of India is the country round Kanoj, which they call Madhyadesa, i.e. the middle of the realms. It is the middle or centre from a geographical point of view, in so far as it lies half waybetween the sea and the mountains, in the midst between the hot and the cold provinces, and also between the eastern and western frontiers of India. But it is a political centre too, because in former times it was the residence of their most famous heroes and kings. The country of Sindh lies to the west of Kanoj. In marching from our country to Sindh we start from the country of Nimroz, i.e. the country of Sijistan, whilst marching to Hind or India proper we start from the side of Kabul. This, however, is not the onlypossible road. You may march into India from all sides, supposing that you can remove the obstacles in the way.

The southernfrontier of India is formed bythe southern ocean. The coast of India begins with Tiz, the capital of frontiers of Makran, and extends thence in a south-eastern direction towards the region ofAl-daibal[2].

The figure 1 is from Al-Beruni's 'Kitab al Hind' translated by Edward C. Sachau



bility of writing such a book had first been given. It is like a magic island of quiet, impartial research in the midst of a world of clashing swords, burning towns, and plundered temples. The object which the author had in view, and never for a moment lost sight of, was to afford the necessary information and training to "*any one* (in Islam) *who wants to converse with the Hindus, and to discuss with them questions of religion, science, or literature, on the very basis of their own civilisation*" (ii. 246).

It is difficult to say what kind of readers Alberuni had, or expected to have, not only for the 'Ινδικά, but for all his other publications on Indian subjects. Probably

The author and his readers.

Figure 1

Notice that Al-Beruni has stated three kinds of questions – those on religion, science or literature. According to D.J. Boilot, he was an impartial writer on customs and creeds of various nations, and was given the title al-Ustadh ("The Master") for his remarkable description of early 11th-century India.

The NCERT authors have omitted the words science and literature while quotingAl-Beruni (figure 2). In the forthcoming chapters, we will describe that India is being deliberately portrayed by NCERT as a regressive society with no appreciable achievements in either science or literature. Therefore omission of words 'science and literature' is a part of larger design.

[2] (Kitabul Hind, vol. 1, pp. 197-198, 208)

Source 1

Al-Biruni's objectives

Al-Biruni described his work as:

> a help to those who want to discuss religious questions with them (the Hindus), and as a repertory of information to those who want to associate with them.

➲ Read the excerpt from Al-Biruni (Source 5) and discuss whether his work met these objectives.

Figure 2 NCERT, p116

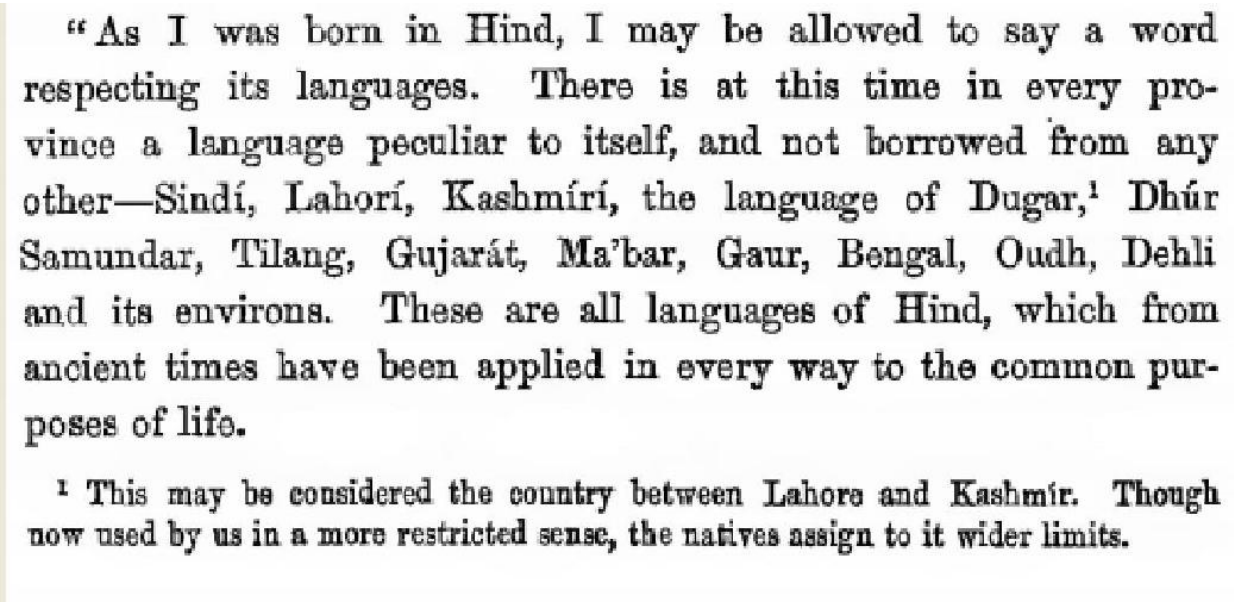
Then, about two centuries later, Amir Khusro mentions about the languages of 'Hind'. His words are worth reading (figure 3):

" *As I was born in Hind, I may be allowed to say a word respecting its languages*. There is at this time in every province a language peculiar to itself, and not borrowed from anyother—Sindi, Lahori, Kashmiri, the language of Dugar," Dhur Samundar, Tilang, Grujarat, Ma'bar, Gaur, Bengal, Oudh, Dehli and its environs. *These are all languages of Hind, which from ancient times have been applied* in every way to the common purposes of life.

"But there is another language *more select than the others*, which all the Brahmans use. Its name from of old is Sanskrit...[3]

[3] (Nuh Sipihir: History of India as told by Its Own Historians, p. 563)

We have emphasised the words which show that, according toAmir Khusro, *all* the languages mentioned belong to a country called 'Hind' and have been in use from 'ancient times'.



"As I was born in Hind, I may be allowed to say a word respecting its languages. There is at this time in every province a language peculiar to itself, and not borrowed from any other—Sindí, Lahorí, Kashmírí, the language of Dugar,[1] Dhúr Samundar, Tilang, Gujarát, Ma'bar, Gaur, Bengal, Oudh, Dehli and its environs. These are all languages of Hind, which from ancient times have been applied in every way to the common purposes of life.

[1] This may be considered the country between Lahore and Kashmír. Though now used by us in a more restricted sense, the natives assign to it wider limits.

Figure 3

Moreover, he is praising Sanskrit in veryunambiguous words. Now contrast it with how the same passage has been presented by NCERT authors for our

children (figure 4).

In 1318 the poet Amir Khusrau noted that there was “a different language in every region of this land: Sindhi, Lahori, Kashmiri, Dvarsamudri (in southern Karnataka), Telangani (inAndhra Pradesh), Gujari (in Gujarat), Ma’bari (in Tamil Nadu), Gauri, (in Bengal)… Awadhi (in eastern Uttar Pradesh) and Hindawi (in the area around Delhi)”. Amir Khusrau went on to explain that in contrast to these languages there was Sanskrit which did not belong to any region. It was an old language and “common people do not know it, only the Brahmanas do”.

NCERT, class 7th, p 10 All words that show the unityof‘Hind’ are excised and animpression is being created that different languages mean different nationalities. The integral unity of India is being deliberately undermined by carefully removing the words that show the unity of our country.

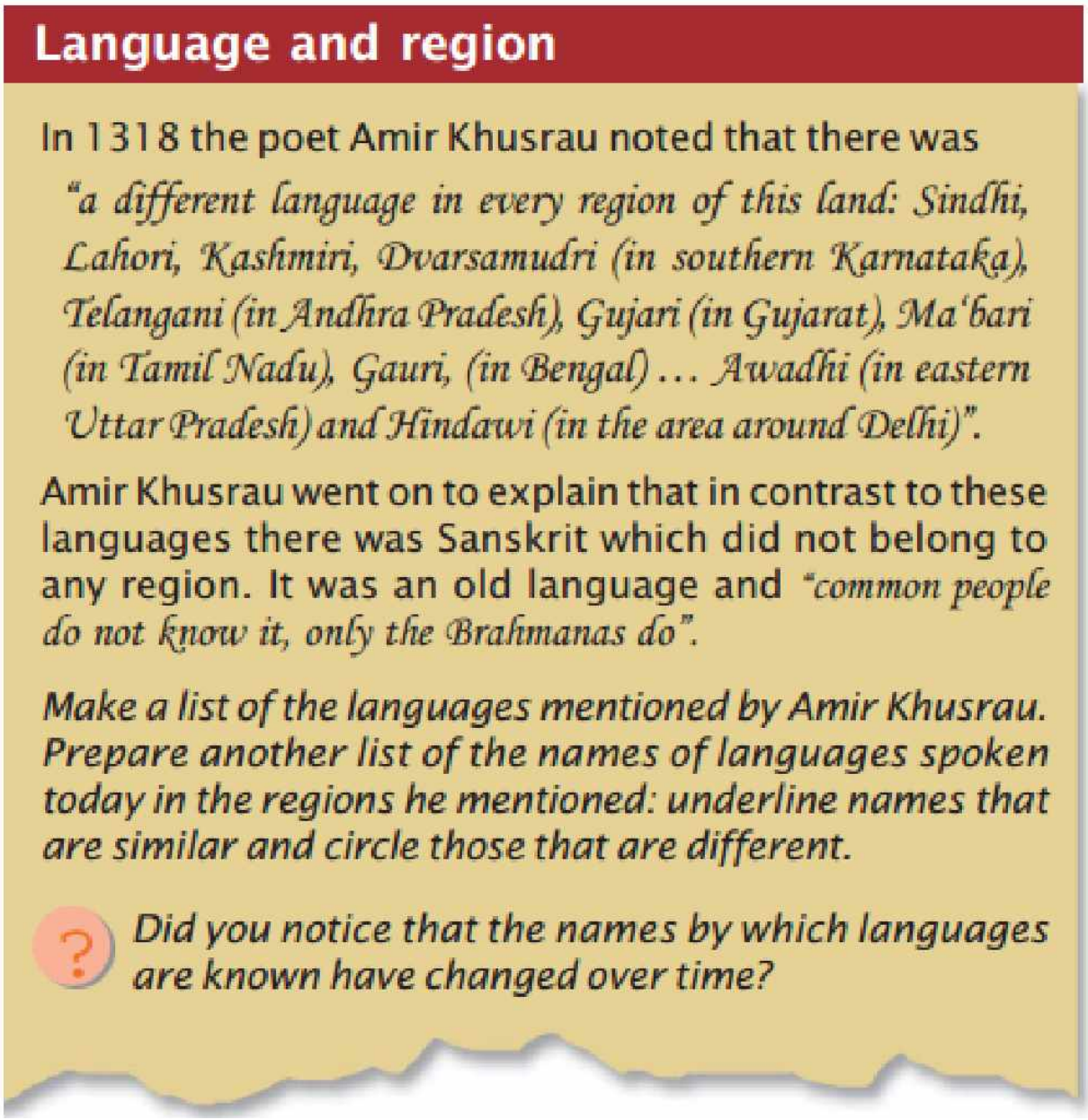

Language and region
In 1318 the poet Amir Khusrau noted that there was
"a different language in every region of this land: Sindhi, Lahori, Kashmiri, Dvarsamudri (in southern Karnataka), Telangani (in Andhra Pradesh), Gujari (in Gujarat), Ma'bari (in Tamil Nadu), Gauri, (in Bengal) … Awadhi (in eastern Uttar Pradesh) and Hindawi (in the area around Delhi)".
Amir Khusrau went on to explain that in contrast to these languages there was Sanskrit which did not belong to any region. It was an old language and "common people do not know it, only the Brahmanas do".
Make a list of the languages mentioned by Amir Khusrau. Prepare another list of the names of languages spoken today in the regions he mentioned: underline names that are similar and circle those that are different.
Did you notice that the names by which languages are known have changed over time?

*Figure 4 : From NCERT, class 7*th

What Khusro was stating was nothing new. Before him Al-beruni had also documented the social unityof the inhabitants of our country by calling all of them by the common term Hindus.

The Hindus write from the left to the right like the Greeks… The most generally known alphabet is called Siddhamatrika, which is by some considered as originating from Kashmir, for the people of Kashmir use it. But it is also used inVaranasi. This town and Kashmir are the high schools of

Hindu sciences… In Malava there is another alphabet called Nagara, which differs from the former only in the shape of the characters.
Next comes an alphabet calledArdhanagari, i.e. halfnagara, so called because it is compounded of the former two. It is used in Bhatiya and some parts of Sindh.
Other alphabets are the Malwari, used in Malwashau, in Southern Sind, towards the sea-coast; the Saindhava, used in Bahmanwa (Brahmanabad) or Almansura; the Karnata, used in Karnatadesa, whence those troops come which in the armies are known as Kannara; the Andhri, used in Andhradesa; the Dirwari (Dravidi), used in Dirwaradesa (Dravidadesa); the Lari, used in Laradesa (Latadesa); the Gauri (Gaudi), used in Purvadesa, i.e. the Eastern country; the Bhaikshuki, used in Udunpur in Purvadesa[4].

The hypocrisyof NCERT authors becomes too evident to be ignored when one finds that while they are using the diversity of India to run it down as a fragmented land, the same diversity is being used as a virtue in context of foreign lands.

The Roman Empire, by contrast, was a mosaic of territories and cultures that were chiefly bound together by a common system of government. Many languages were spoken in the empire, but for the purposes of administrationLatin and Greek were the most widely used, indeed the only languages.

NCERT, class 12th, p 60

One major difference that the current NCERT books have with respect to the outdated colonial discourse is that during colonial times only‘Tamil culture’was being projected as disconnected from

[4] (Kitabul Hind, vol 1, pp. 172-173)
the pan-Hindu India, while these books are creating such faultlines all over India.

By misquoting Khusro, the NCERT authors are portraying India as a loose collection of geographical regions having nothing in common, including language. At the same time another perception that is being created is that

Sanskrit does not belong to any of these regions. The narrative of NCERT books is designed to present Sanskrit as an exclusivist language, which has always belonged to Brahmans, who were foreign invaders called 'Aryans' (details in subsequent chapters). Although none of it is based on historical facts, the tools of propaganda are used to create this perception among students.

For example, after sowing the seed that Sanskrit "did not belong to any region", on the very next page, the students are presented a teaser which asks them (figure 5):

Do you remember whatAmir Khusrau had to say regarding Sanskrit, knowledge and Brahmanas?
NCERT, class 7th, p 11

closely connected with the social and economic organisation of local communities. As the social worlds of these groups altered so too did their beliefs.

It was during this period that important changes occurred in what we call Hinduism today. These included the worship of new deities, the construction of temples by royalty and the growing importance of Brahmanas, the priests, as dominant groups in society.

Their knowledge of Sanskrit texts earned the Brahmanas a lot of respect in society. Their dominant position was consolidated by the support of their **patrons** – new rulers searching for prestige.

One of the major developments of this period was the emergence of the idea of bhakti – of a loving, personal deity that devotees could reach without the aid of priests or elaborate rituals. You will be learning

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One of the major developments was the emergence of the idea of bhakti — of a loving, personal deity that devotees could reach without the aid of priests or elaborate rituals. You will be learning about this, and other traditions, in Chapter 8.

Do you remember what Amir Khusrau had to say regarding Sanskrit, knowledge and Brahmanas?

Patron
An influential, wealthy individual who supports another person – an artiste, a craftsperson, a learned man, or a noble.

Do you remember what Amir Khusrau had to say regarding Sanskrit, knowledge and Brahmanas?

Patron
An influential, wealthy individual who supports another person – an artiste, a craftsperson, a learned man, or a noble.

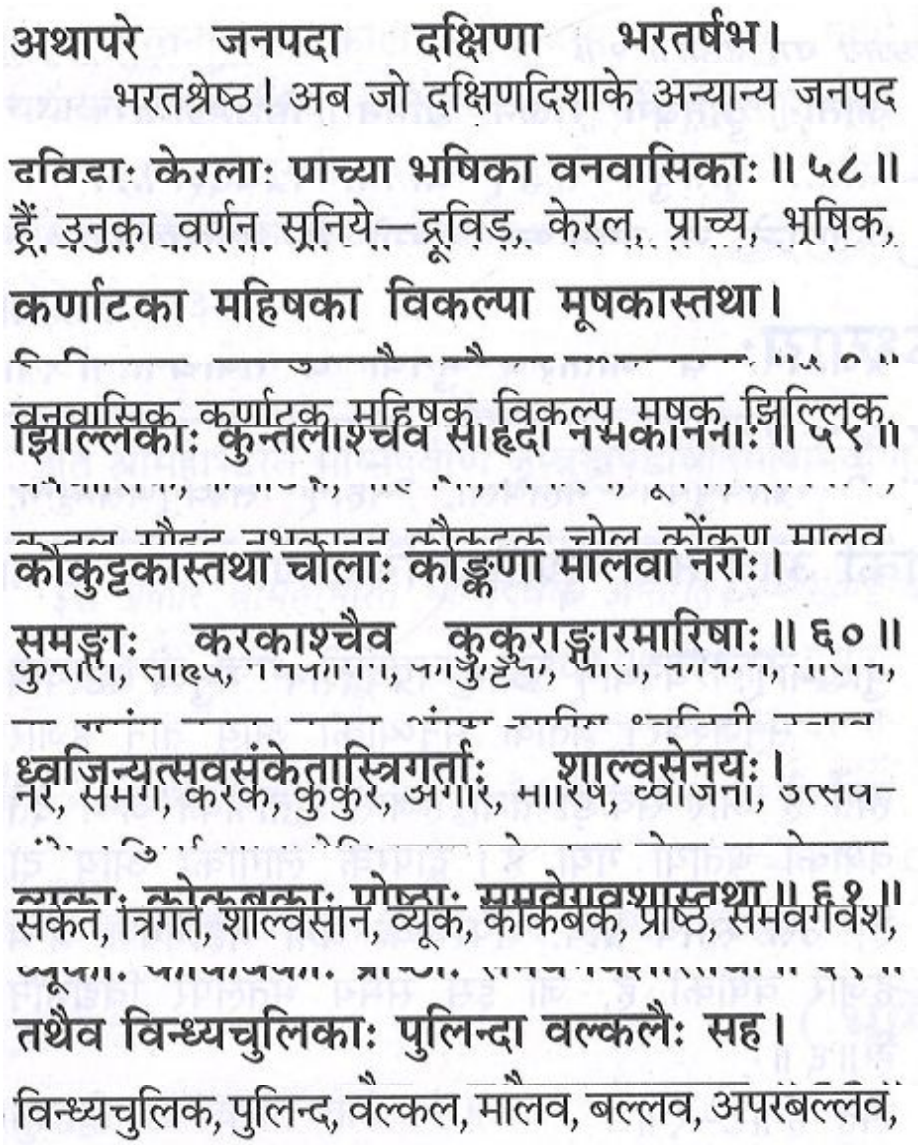
Figure 5 : From NCERT, class 7th

This is a tried and tested propaganda tool that is especiallyeffective when the target audience has an impressionable mind. In this trick, the target is fed with some information and then posed a loaded question. The aim is to get an answer on the basis of information that has been supplied. By giving the

desired answer, the target audience tends to internalise the information, thereby becoming an unwilling accomplice to further spreading it.

The entire narrative is designed topresent the populace as a disparate setofcommunities thatdid not have anyreligious or spiritualmoorings. The elements of unity, philosophical and religious, are either undermined or are projected as inimical to each other.

When a curriculum is designed, words and phrases are chosen to emphasise some aspects so as to create a robust narrative. In stark contrast, the emphasis of the NCERT textbooks is on the contrary.



अथापरे जनपदा दक्षिणा भरतर्षभ।

भरतश्रेष्ठ! अब जो दक्षिणदिशाके अन्यान्य जनपद

द्रविडाः केरलाः प्राच्या भषिका वनवासिकाः॥ ५८॥

हैं, उनका वर्णन सुनिये—द्रविड, केरल, प्राच्य, भूषिक,

कर्णाटका महिषका विकल्पा मूषकास्तथा।

वनवासिक, कर्णाटक, महिषक, विकल्प, मूषक, झिल्लिक,

झिल्लिकाः कुन्तलाश्चैव सौहृदा नभकाननाः॥ ५९॥

कोकुट्टकास्तथा चोलाः काङ्कणा मालवा नराः।

समङ्गाः करकाश्चैव कुकुराङ्गारमारिषाः॥ ६०॥

नर, समंग, करक, कुकुर, अंगार, मारिष, ध्वजिनी, उत्सव-

ध्वजिन्युत्सवसंकेतास्त्रिगर्ताः शाल्वसेनयः।

संकेत, त्रिगर्त, शाल्वसेन, व्यूक, काकबक, प्रोष्ठ, समवेगवंश,

तथैव विन्ध्यचुलिकाः पुलिन्दा वल्कलैः सह।

विन्ध्यचुलिक, पुलिन्द, वल्कल, मालव, बल्लव, अपरबल्लव,

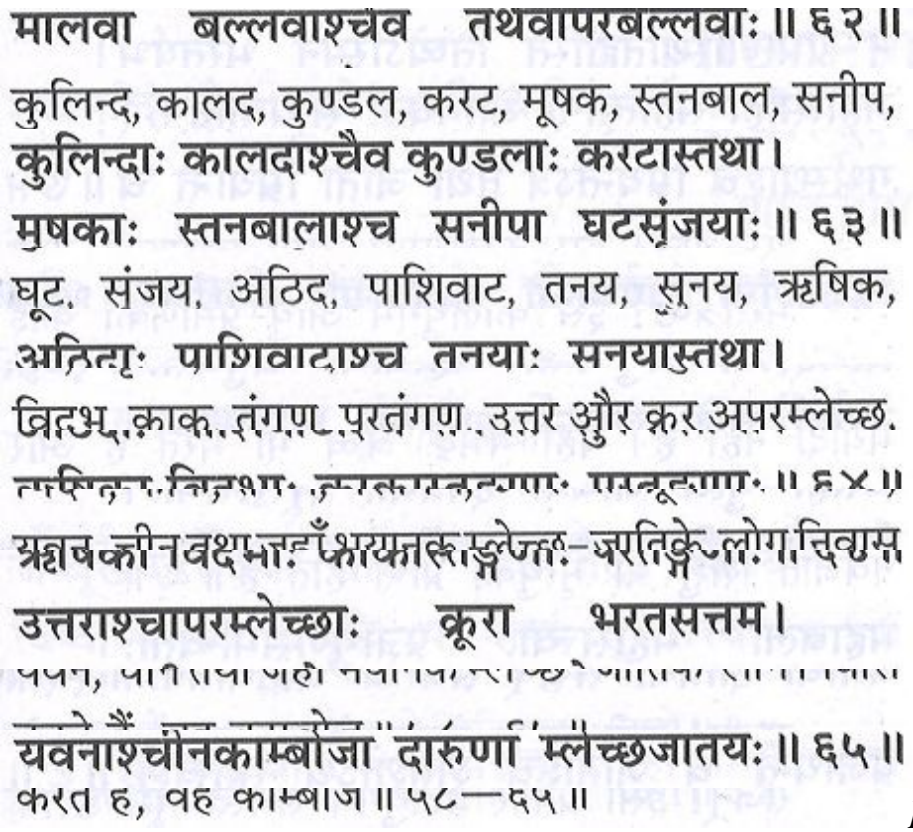

मालवा बल्लवाश्चैव तथवापरबल्लवाः ॥ ६२ ॥
कुलिन्द, कालद, कुण्डल, करट, मूषक, स्तनबाल, सनीप,
कुलिन्दाः कालदाश्चैव कुण्डलाः करटास्तथा।
मुषकाः स्तनबालाश्च सनीपा घटसंजयाः ॥ ६३ ॥
घूट, संजय, अठिद, पाशिवाट, तनय, सुनय, ऋषिक,
अठिदाः पाशिवाटाश्च तनयाः सनयास्तथा।
त्रिगर्भ, क्राक, तंगण, परतंगण, उत्तर और क्रूर अपरम्लेच्छ,
उत्तराश्चापरम्लेच्छाः क्रूरा भरतसत्तम।
यवनाश्चौनकाम्बोजा दारुणा म्लेच्छजातयः ॥ ६५ ॥
करत ह, वह काम्बाज ॥ ५८—६५ ॥

Figure 6 : Mahabharat depicting the southern region of ancient India

The following table highlights the contrasting manner in which the NCERT authors have projected the civilization of India against that of the Middle-East:

NCERT's Prism of Religion
INDIC [class 6th, p 6]

Did you notice the title of this book, Our Pasts? We have used the word ‘pasts’ in plural to draw attention to the fact that the past was different for different groups of people. For example, the lives of herders or farmers were different from those of kings and queens, the lives of merchants were different from those of crafts persons, and so on.Also, as is true even today, people followed different practices and customs in different parts of our country
ISLAMIC [class 11th, p 77]

As we enter the twenty-first century, there are over 1 billion Muslims living in all parts of the world. They are citizens of different nations, speak different languages, and dress differently. The processes by which they became Muslims were varied, and so were the circumstances in which they went their separate ways. Yet, the Islamic communityhas its roots ina more unified past which unfolded roughly1,400 years ago in the Arabian Peninsula. In this chapter we are going to read about the rise of Islam and its expansion over a vast territory extending from Egypt to Afghanistan, the core area of Islamic civilization from 600 to 1200. In these centuries, Islamic society exhibited multiple political and cultural patterns. The term Islamic is used here not only in its purely religious sense but also for the overallsocietyand culture historically associated with Islam.

CHAPTER 2 Uprooting the Linguistic Heritage

Since times immemorial, Sanskrit is the link that connects countless Indian generations. It is not only a medium but a repository of the Indian culture, thought, philosophy, cosmology, ethos, and science – the essence of Indic civilization.

If this link between past, present and future generations is snapped, our whole culture, society and civilization will remain incomplete. Yet, this is exactly what NCERT books are designed to achieve. Every thinkable negative trait, like misogyny, exploitation and slavery, is associated with Sanskrit in order to stigmatise and demonise it. A language that can be a source of immutable selfconfidence and pride is transformed into a tool for selfdeprecation.

I

n the previous chapter, we learnt how NCERT authors cherry picked Amir Khusro's quote to attack Sanskrit as an exclusivist language; in this chapter we further examine how these authors systematically malign it as primarily a Brahmanical tool for the subjugationof women and exploitation of different sections of Indian society.

To further this agenda against Sanskrit, these authors employ 'classical conditioning', an often-used propaganda tool. In this technique, the behavior of targets (in this case, students) is altered to make them respond in a desired manner.
Nazis in Germany, in the years preceding the Holocaust, employed this technique to associate Jews with exploitation, misogyny and exclusivism. The Nazi propagandists, who often included historians and ideology-driven administrators, generally used vivid imagery, like depicting Jews as rats, to associate them with negativity. The aim was to evoke in German minds a feeling of hatred and disgust at the mere mention or sight of a Jew. As expected, many Germans acquired this hatred for Jews and associated them with negative traits without ever realising that they were victims of Nazi propaganda. This classical conditioning made it acceptable to hate and despise Jews in German society, which ultimately proved disastrous not only for Jews, but also for German society and the nation.

The NCERT authors employ the same propaganda techniques in demonising Sanskrit.

Associating Sanskrit with misogyny
The negative stereotyping of India and its traditions has been going onsince colonialtimes, but eventhen, Sanskrit was highlyappreciated for its elaborate, well-thought-out and scientific structure. The current NCERT books are creating a perception of Sanskrit in which it is associated with negative connotations only.
For instance, notice the following passage (figure 7):

With the arrival of words such as Thara Mukurtham our women had become puppets in the hands of their husbands … we ended up with such fathers who advise their daughters ... that they had been gifted away to their husbands and they belong to their husband's place. This is the … result of our *association with Sanskrit*.

NCERT, class 8th, p 119 When NCERT was requested (thrugh RTI application) to furnish the original documents on the basis of which the above assertion is based, it curtly denied having any such record. There are

three distinct possibilities for this stonewalling by NCERT. One, this passage is an outright fabrication and Periyar never uttered or recorded these words. Second, like the NCERT authors did with the quote ofAmir Khusro, they have twisted Periyar's words to fit intotheir anti-Sanskrit agenda. Third possibilityis that Periyar actually expressed such parochial views.

Given the propensity of the authors of these books, the first two

options seem to be more

plausible, but the NCERT

authors can be given the

benefit of doubt in this case

as Periyar was one of those

'leaders' whohad dislike for

a unified India and its

cultural moorings. Whether

he had internalised the

theory ofAryan invasion or

not, can be debated, but he surely did use it as an effective tool in the identity politics that is so rampant in our country today. If the colonial officers and missionaries are given the credit of creating the North South divide (or Aryan Dravidian divide), then

Figure 7 : NCERT, class 8th Periyar can be given the credit for a pragmatic and fruitful use of this theory to put the divide in practice. His antipathy to India was so extreme that during preindependence days, he had joined hands with Jinnah and his Islamists to demand a separate slice of India for 'Dravidians'. Since his views support the disruptive agenda of the current NCERT authors and their political masters, a lot of space has been given to glorify them.

E.V. RamaswamyNaicker, or Periyar, as he was called, came from a middle-class family. Interestingly, he had been an ascetic in his early life and had studied *Sanskrit scriptures* carefully. Later, he became a member of the Congress, only to leave it in disgust when he found that at a feast organised by nationalists, seating arrangements followed caste distinctions – that is, the lower castes were made to sit at a distance from the upper castes. Convinced that untouchables had to fight for their dignity, Periyar founded the Self-Respect Movement. He argued that untouchables were the true upholders of an original Tamil and Dravidian culture which had been subjugated by Brahmans.

NCERT, class 8th, p 119

Notice the ex cathedra tone and tenor of the passage. Also notice 'Sanskrit' thoughtfully appended to 'scriptures'. The aim of this linguistic jugglery is to reinforce the perception that it is the deadly combination of Brahmans and their language Sanskrit that is responsible for misogyny and 'subjugation' of 'lower castes', 'Dravidians' and 'untouchables'.
Depicting Periyar as an 'ascetic' who had read 'Sanskrit scriptures *carefully*'is a ploy used by NCERT authors to make their assertions more acceptable. This trick, called appeal to authority, is generally used by advertising agencies or propagandists. During the decades from 1940 to 1970, tobacco industry used this tool to promote cigarette smoking. In those days, large advertisements innewspapers depicted a person wearing a white coat, accompanied by words like 'As your dentist, I would recommend smoking'.
These advertisements were designed to spread the message that an expert (in this case, a dentist) was endorsing smoking for health reasons, therefore, it must be true. A normal person rarely sees through the trick and NCERT uses it to the hilt byemploying persons of dubious thinking as their mouthpieces. Same technique has been used in case of Ramabai also.

Pandita Ramabai, a great scholar of *Sanskrit*, felt that Hinduism was oppressive towards women.
NCERT, class 8th ,p 113,

The message for students is clear: if a Sanskrit scholar is saying that Hinduism was oppressive towards women, it must be true. We will discuss about the evangelicalmotives of Ramabai inforthcoming chapters in detail, but here we reproduce an excerpt from her own writings to show that even when she had started espousing the cause of missionaries, she accepted the fact that the sorry state of women in India was more due to social customs than due to Hindu religion or scriptures. In her words: “Theyhave positivelyforbidden parents and guardians to give away girls in marriage unless good suitors were offered to them.”

“To a distinguished, handsome suitor of equal caste should a father give his daughter in accordance with the prescribed rule, though she have not attained the proper age.” Manu IX. 88.

“But the maiden, though marriageable, should rather stop in the father’s house until death, than that he should ever give her to a man destitute of good qualities.” Manu IX.89. But, alas, here too the law is defied bycruel custom. It allows some men to remain unmarried, but woe to the maiden and her family if she is so unfortunate as to remain single after the marriageable age. Although no law has ever said so, the popular belief is that a woman can have no salvation unless she be formally married[1].

She is not blaming Hinduism but ‘popular belief’and ‘cruel custom’ for the state of things and is citing Manu to substantiate her claims. Yet NCERT authors have pinned the blame on Hinduism.

Manusmriti - A Sanskrit "legal text"

Ironically, they have vilified Manusmriti as a ‘Sanskrit legal text’ wherever it has suited their nefarious agenda. The term ‘legal text’ implies that Manusmriti is a canonical book which itself is wrong as the sage Manu does not claim it to be so anywhere. Secondly, a legal text is the one which has the backing of an enforcement agency. In the entire history, we do not find any king who states that Manusmriti is to be a canonical book of his kingdom. Thirdly, in the beginning of Manusmriti, we are told that it was created when some sages came to gain wisdom from Manu. In other words, it is not a book created for jurisprudence at the behest of a ruler. As a result,

it does not have the backing of a political power, which is must for a book to be considered a ‘legal text’. Fourthly, the way of life it teaches is in the form of suggestions whereas a ‘law’ has to be obligatory. Thus, terming it a ‘law book’or a ‘legal text’is erroneous. Ever since Manusmriti has come to be used as a political tool by a lobby to denigrate Hindus, Hinduism and its philosophy, there has been vehement opposition to this politicisation from a vast section of the religion. They claim that the present form of Manusmriti is not the originalone and has beencorrupted byunscrupulous elements. During ancient and medieval times, there was no printing press and

[1] (The High Caste Hindu Women, p. 60)

copies from the original had to be written byhand. In sucha scenario, adding or deleting verses was easy. In a vast and variegated nation as ours, such alterations might have gone undetected for a very long time, leading to an acceptance of such counterfeit verses as genuine. The persons responsible for this unethical practice could have been one or more rogue individuals. Or, it could have been the handiwork of persons belonging to traditions inimical to Hinduism. Whether it was a rogue Brahman or a Jesuit or a combination of such individuals is hard to pinpoint. However, it also justifies the reason why more stress was on oral traditions whereas written texts were not considered to be trustworthy in earlier times. AlBeruni expresses this pragmatic approach of Hindus in his works:

The scientific books of the Hindus are composed in various favourite metres, by which they intend, considering that the books soon become corrupted by additions and omissions, to preserve them exactly as they are, in order to facilitate their being learned by heart, because they consider as canonical only that which is known by heart, not that which exists in writing[2].

Remember that we are talking about a time when printing press had not been invented. It was easy for a scribe to make willful alterations while copying a book by hand. To purge Manusmriti of adulteration, its critical editions have been produced by some scholars. How effective or how accurate can be such endeavors is debatable, but it points to a very fundamental aspect of Hinduism as well as its adherents. It is not a religion written in stone. It can

be changed with time and Hindus are perfectly at home with such a varying form of their Dharm. It is constantly evolving and changing according to the requirements of the age.

[2] (Kitabul Hind, vol.1, p. 19)

On the opposite end of the spectrum are Hindu baiters who have been using Manusmriti for their shortsighted political gains. They portray as if it was sage Manu who wrote verses that condone exploitation of so-called 'Shudras' and 'women'. They are reluctant to admit the evolutionary nature of Hinduism because by doing so, they won't be able to paint its negative or regressive image. More importantly, they are deliberately trying to portray Manusmriti as a cornerstone of Hinduism, which it is not.

"The Manusmrti is one of the best-known legal texts of early India, written in Sanskrit and compiled between c.second century BCEand c. second century CE…According to *Sanskrit legal texts*, women were not supposed to have independent access to resources such as land."

NCERT, class 12th, p 39 – 40

A befitting riposte to this calumny against Hindu texts can be taken from the writings of Matilda Joslyn Gage. She was a fierce advocate for the rights of women during the nineteenth century. She quoted HT Colebrooke's digest on Hindu law of inheritance to depict the contrast between the dismal treatment meted out to women under Christianity on one hand and their enhanced status as presented in Vedas and other sacred literatures of ancient India.

In the Veda, in Codes of Law, in sacred ordinances, the wife is held as one person with the husband; both are considered one. When the wife is not dead, half the body remains; how shall another take the property when half the body of the owner lives?After the death of the husband the widow shall take his wealth; this is primeval law. Though a woman be dependent, the alienationof female property, or of the mother's right over her son by the gift of a husband alone is not valid in law or reason; The female property of

wives like the property of a stranger, may not be given, for there is want of ownership.

Neither the husband, nor the son, nor the father, nor the brother, have power to use or alien the legal property of a woman…We hold it proper that the wife's co"operation shall be required in civil contracts and in religious acts under the text…A gift to a wife is irrevocable.

The collection of East Indian laws made under authority of the celebrated Warren Hastings, 1776, is of similar character. The kinds of property a wife can hold separate from her husband at her own disposal by will are specified. During long centuries while under Christian law the Christian wife was not allowed even the control of property her own at the time of marriage, or of that which might afterwards be given her, and her right of the disposition of property at the time of her death was not recognized in Christian lands, the Hindoo wife under immemorial custom could receive property by gift alike from her parents, or from strangers, or acquire it by her own industry, and property thus gained was at her own disposal in case of her death.Another remarkable feature of Indian law contrasting with that of Christian lands was preference of woman over man in heirship. In case of a daughter's death, the mother heired in preference to father, son, or even husband[3].

The same has been quoted on the authority of Brihaspati Sutra elsewhere[4].
[3] (Woman Church and State, p. 25) [4] (Aiyangar, 1941, p. 51)

Sanskrit as a language of 'elites'
Another line of assault on Sanskrit is to depict it as a language of 'elites'.

If you look through the sources cited in this chapter once more you will notice that historians consider several elements when they analyse texts. They examine whether texts were written in Prakrit, Pali or Tamil, languages that were probably used by ordinary people, or in Sanskrit, a language meant *almost exclusively* for priests and elites.

NCERT, class 12th, p 72 Our understanding of these processes is derived primarily from texts written in *Sanskrit by and for Brahmanas*. NCERT,

class 12th, p 54 These norms were compiled in *Sanskrit* texts known as the Dharmasutras and Dharmashastras.
NCERT, class 12th, p 58

This line of attack is doublyadvantageous for the designs ofNCERT; it reinforces the perception of 'Brahmans' and 'Sanskrit', both being exclusivist in nature. The truth, however, is that mastery of such a versatile language requires a lot of dedication and time. Common populace is generallyaverse to such dedication; therefore the number of people who opted to be Brahmans was very few. This rule is applicable to all places at all times. A parallel can be drawn with present dayAmerica: the language used by a person on the street as well as for administrative purposes is English, but the terms and phrases used on the street are very different from those used in literature, poetry, jurisprudence and other administrative documents. For ancient India, this situation has been explained byAl-Beruni in his works:
The barriers which separate Muslims and Hindus rest on different causes. First, theydiffer from us in everything which other nations have in common. And here we first mention the language, although the difference of language also exists between other nations. If you want to conquer this difficulty (i.e. to learn Sanskrit), you will not find it easy, because the language is of an enormous range, both in words and inflections, something like the Arabic, calling one and the same thing by various names, both original and derived, and using one and the same word for a varietyof subjects, which, inorder tobe properlyunderstood, must be distinguished from each other by various qualifying epithets. For nobody could distinguish between the various meanings of a word unless he understands the context in which it occurs, and its relation both to the following and the preceding parts of the sentence. The Hindus, like other people, boast of this enormous range of their language, whilst in reality it is a defect. Further, the language is divided into a neglected vernacular one, only in use among the common people, and a classical one, only in use among the upper and educated classes, which is much cultivated, and subject to the rules of grammatical inflection and etymology, and to allthe niceties of grammar and rhetoric[5].

It is notable that Al-Beruni categorically states the lingua franca being a vernacular form of Sanskrit but the NCERT authors have cherrypicked quotes from evenAl-Beruni to discredit the language.

"As we have seen, Al-Biruni's description of the caste system was deeply influenced by his study of *normative Sanskrit texts* which laid down the rules governing the system from the point of view of the Brahmanas.

[5] (Kitabul Hind, vol. 1, p. 17-18)

However, in real life the system was not quite as rigid. For instance, the categories defined as antyaja (literally, born outside the system) were often expected to provide inexpensive labour to both peasants and zamindars (see also Chapter 8). In other words, while they were often subjected to social oppression, they were included within economic networks."

NCERT, class 12th, p 125

Here again, NCERT authors have put inAl-Beruni's mouth words he never uttered.

"After the Sudra follow the people calledAntyaja, who render various kinds of services, who are not reckoned amongst any caste, but only as members of a certain craft or profession. There are eight classes of them, who freely intermarry with each other, except the fuller, shoemaker, and weaver, for no others would condescend to have anything to do with them. These eight guilds are the fuller, shoemaker, juggler, the basket and shield maker, the sailor, fisherman, the hunter of wild animals and of birds, and the weaver. The four castes do not live together with them in one and the same place. These guilds live near the villages and towns of the four castes, but outside them. The people called Hadi, Doma (Domba), Candala, and Badhatau (sic) are not reckoned amongst any caste or guild. They are occupied with dirty work, like the cleansing of the villages and other services. They are considered as one sole class, and distinguished only by their occupations[6]."

To create an impression of exploitation, NCERT authors have deliberately added that theyprovided ‘inexpensive labour’, whereas
[6] (ibid p. 101)

Al-Beruni never mentioned anysuch exploitation. More significantly, at the time ofAl-Beruni, there were no ‘zamindars’to exploit them as this oppressive system is a legacy of the Muslim rule. This subterfuge has been used to blame the ancient Hindu society for the ills of Islamic rule.

Since the ancient Indic society abhored killing of animals for pecuniary gains or to satisfy their taste buds, it was more like an ethical stand against killing of animals.

“Of the classes beneath the castes, the Hadi are the best spoken of, because theykeep themselves free from everything unclean. Next follow the Doma, who play on the lute and sing. The still lower classes practise as a trade killing and the inflicting of judicial punishments. The worst of all are the Badhatau, who not only devour the flesh of dead animals, but even of dogs and other beasts[7].”

Far from being discriminated or oppressed, the antyaja, like any other group, had their own guilds and were free to form rules for their own community. In mutual disputes, they were considered the most reliable witnesses[8].

Till the time ofAl-Beruni, no Muslim invader had been able to gain a foothold in India, therefore, using words like ‘zamindars’ is a deception which innocent students will not be able to discern. Such deceptive portrayals are used with impunity by NCERT authors to absolve Muslim rulers of the barbarities they perpetrated during medievalperiod and project Brahmans as architects of all oppression.

Creating, widening and entrenching linguistic fault lines To foster hatred for Brahmans and Sanskrit in the minds of youngsters, both are depicted as hegemonic and predatory in nature.

[7] (ibid p. 102)
[8] (Manusmriti 8/68)

To achieve this diabolical objective, seeds of differentiation are added in class 6th and are then further nourished by tricky use of phrases and terminologies that tend to establish and collectivise linguistic identities.

“Sanskrit is part of family of languages known as IndoEuropean. Some Indian languages such as Assamese, Gujarati, Hindi, Kashmiri and Sindhi, and many European languages such as English, French, German, Greek, Italian and Spanish belong to this family… Other languages used in the subcontinent belong to different families. For instance, those used in the north-east belong to the Tibeto-Burman family; Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam belong to the Dravidian family; and the languages spoken in Jharkhand and parts of central India belong to theAustro-Asiatic family.”

NCERT, class 6th, p 42

An uninformed reader might think that the above passage is just informative in nature.As a stand alone passage, it looks innocuous and harmless but what follows after a few pages makes the difference. This passage has been used as a foundation to sow seeds of animosity and conflict purely on the basis of linguistic identities.

“Sometimes, the people who composed the hymns described themselves as Aryas and called their opponents Dasas or Dasyus. These were people who did not perform sacrifices, and *probably spoke different languages*. Later, the term dasa (and the feminine dasi) came to mean slave. Slaves were women and men who were often captured in war. They were treated as the property of their owners, who could make them do whatever work they wanted.”

NCERT, class 6th, p 47 The above passage is mischievous on at least four counts and can be treated as a classic example of obfuscation.

Firstly, the word ‘sometimes’is used where the intention is to leave vagueness so that there can be many interpretations. To understand its impact, try to think of a biography with a sentence, ‘sometimes he called himself Shakespeare’. This single word generates an image of fickle mindedness on part of a person or society about which it is being used.

Secondly, the word ‘Arya’has not been explained to the students. Nowhere in the entire book has it been explained that the word ‘Arya’ is a Sanskrit word that means ‘a person with noble qualities’. This deliberate gap inknowledge ofstudents will be further exploited by NCERT authors to plant the colonial theory ofAryan invasion, which in turn, will be further linked with Nazism using the same technique in classes 8thand 9th. The freedom fighter and philosopher Aurobindo Ghosh has explained the term Arya as:

In later times, the word Arya expressed a particular ethical and social ideal, an ideal of well-governed life, candour, courtesy, nobility, straight dealing, courage, gentleness, purity, humanity, compassion, protection of the weak, liberality, observance of social duty, eagerness of knowledge, respect for the wise and learned, the social accomplishments. It was the combined ideal of the Brahmana and the Kshatriya. Everything that departed from this ideal, everything that tended towards the ignoble, mean, obscure, rude, cruel or false, was termed un-Aryan or anarya (colloq anari). There is no word in human speech that has a nobler history.[9]

Yet, it is this history which NCERT authors are perverting. Aurobindo’s assertions are based on classical texts of our country[9]. [9] (Sri Aurobindo Circle Fifth Number, p 176)

The authors have purposefully refrained from explaining this term since it is being used by them to propagate the datedAryan Invasion Theory (discussed in next chapter) clandestinely.

Thirdly, the words are chosen to show as if ‘Dasyus’ were a different set of people. Phrases are designed to create an effect that the ‘Aryas’ opposed another set of persons on the basis of difference in language or merely because they did not perform sacrifices.According to traditional Sanskrit sources, etymologically the word ‘Dasyu’ means a person who is devoid of noble qualities and the one who creates obstructions in noble acts[10]. In modern lexicon, theArya-Dasyu pair is comparable tothe gentleman-criminal binarysystem, but the NCERT authors have turned it into a linguistic conflict. Another source to verify such a conflict can be Sanskrit scriptures. Let us look at them.

In the last two centuries, one of the most respected scholars of Sanskrit as well as of Vedic literature has been Swami Dayanand Sarasvati. His translation of Rigved tells us that the word 'Dasyu' means a dacoit. The word appears in Rigved at 1/33/4, 1/33/7, 1/ 51/5, 1/59/6, 6/18/4, 3/34/9.

Similarly, in the Shanti parv of Mahabharat, there is an entire chapter titled 'Amaryadit dasyu vritti ki ninda' or 'Criticism of unchecked attitude to brigandage'. The title in itself is self-explanatorythat it is a 'vritti' or tendency[11].

In the same parv, there is another chapter that is devoted to salvation for Dasyu. It states that:
O Yudhishthir! Those dacoits who do not exceed the line of ethics do not suffer after their death.
Hymn 1,Volume 5, Shanti – parv, p 409, chapter 135 [10] (Nirukt 7/23)
[11] (Mahabharat, p. 406, vol 5)

Thus, the word 'Dasyu'does not denote someone who is ethnically, racially or linguistically different, but refers to the behaviour and propensity of an individual. Likewise, the word 'dasa' means a servant and not a 'dasyu'. The word appears at many places in Rigved. In 3/34/6, it has been translated as 'serving Shudra' by Swami Dayanand Sarasvati.

In forthcoming chapters we will repeatedly encounter quotes from NCERT books which will imply that ancient philosophers, called Brahmans, were cause of a lot of problems that plagued the ancient Indian society. We intend to contest this assumption and generalisation on two counts. It is not corroborated by historical facts and moreover, it tends to falsely demonise a group of persons, which has a tendencyof disrupting co–existence bycreating fictitious fault lines within society.

Fourthly, according to NCERT authors, Vedas condone slavery, which is patently false. The above passage quoted from NCERT means that the sages who composed the Vedic hymns were so primitive in their outlook that they resorted to inhuman practices of enslaving 'prisoners of war'and then forcing them to do 'whatever work they wanted'.

After this, the NCERT authors project Vedas as the root cause of oppression and servitude.
In the Rigveda, people were described in terms of the work they did and the languages they spoke.
NCERT, class 6th, p 53

To fathom the depravityof these assertions let us look at Manusmriti: eq[kckgw#i Tt kuka; kykdst kr ; kscfg%
EysPNokpÜÓ; Zokp%l osZr snL; o%Le`r k%A[12]

[12] (Manusmriti 10:45)

This hymn makes it crystal clear that a Dasyu may be someone who can be speaking any of the languages (okp%) –Arya languages or Mlechchh language (EysPNokpÜÓ; Z). Disregarding such clear and unambiguous descriptions available, the NCERT authors are obfuscating Sanskrit terms to create rifts among different sections of our country.

Similarly, NCERT twists the meaning of Sanskrit word ‘mlechchh’ to suit their designs:
Sometimes those who spoke non-Sanskritic languages were
labelled as mlechchhas and looked down upon. NCERT, class 12th, p 65

Try to visualise the above sentence from the perspective of a child belonging to North-East, Jharkhand, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Kerala or Andhra Pradesh. Their languages have already been declared non-Sanskritic by NCERT. Such faulty depictions are bound to make them antagonistic to Sanskrit as well as the traditions linked to it.

TheTurkic intruders, whoviolentlyinvaded the countryand plundered its wealth, are designated as migrants as if they had come here to earn a peaceful living.

“TheTurkishrulers were designated as Turushka,Tajika were people from Tajikistan and Parashika were people from Persia. Sometimes, terms used for other people were applied to the new migrants. For instance, the Turks and Afghans were referred to as Shakas (Chapters 2 and 3) and Yavanas (a

term used for Greeks). A more general term for these migrant communities was mlechchha, indicating that they did not observe the norms of caste society and spoke languages that were not derived from *Sanskrit*. Such terms sometimes had a derogatory connotation."

NCERT, class 12th, p 152 It is clearly perceptible that NCERT authors are trying to antagonise different social, linguistic and religious groups whether Indian or foreign-origin against Brahmans and Sanskrit. In the following passage, the NCERT authors are working on building the same Brahman versus the rest antagonism.

"According to the Shastras, only Kshatriyas could be kings. However, several important ruling lineages probably had different origins. The social background of the Mauryas, who ruled over a large empire, has been *hotly debated*. While later Buddhist texts *suggested* they were Kshatriyas, Brahmanical texts described them as being of "low" origin. The Shungas and Kanvas, the immediate successors of the Mauryas, were Brahmanas. In fact, political power was effectively open to anyone who could muster support and resources, and rarely depended on birth as a Kshatriya. Other rulers, such as the Shakas who came from Central Asia, were regarded as mlechchhas, barbarians or outsiders by the Brahmanas. However, one of the earliest inscriptions in Sanskrit describes how Rudradaman, the best-known Shaka ruler (c. second century CE), rebuilt Sudarshana lake (Chapter 2). This suggests that powerful mlechchhas were familiar with Sanskritic traditions."

NCERT, class 12th, p 62 – 63

They are implying that mlechchh was used for those who were outsiders. The Sanskrit synonym for mlechchh is anarya or one who is not noble in deeds. Thus, NCERT authors are giving regional or racial overtones to a word in order to propagate their agenda. In fact, the Indic literature and history is full of instances where the word mlechchh is used for Indians who have deviated from the noble path. For instance, in Ramayan, Ram's step-mother Kakekiye is called anarya for violating the Dharm of a mother and a wife.

r e~vkt Zo l ek; qÙkÚe~vuk; kZl R; okfnue~A
mokp jkee~dSds; hopue~Hj+' knk#.ke~A
That wicked Kaikeyi uttered very cruel words to that Rama, who was committed to sincerity and speaking of truth[13].

From the above passage it is clear that even a member of the king's family could be called a mlechchh if he or she violated his or her svadharm. Obviously, these facts don't suit the NCERT agenda, and are not shared with the students. Similarly, the virtues and aptitude of an individual determined whether he became a Brahman, Kshatriya, Vaishya, Shudra or Mlechchh.

u t kR; kczã.kÜÓ=k{kf=k; ksoS' ; , o uA
u ' knzsu p oSEysPNksHksfnr kxq.kdeZfHk%A
Not by birth are the Brahmana, Kshatriya, Vaistya, Shudra, and Mlechchh separated, but by virtues and works[14].

It is clear now that mlechchh was not necessarily a foreigner or a person of a different race or "caste" or a non-Brahman. So, what exactly was meant by mlechchh?

R; ÙkLo/ ekpj.kkfu?k.kk%i ji hMdk%
p.MÜÓfgal dkfuR; aEysPNkLr sáfoosfdu%A

Those who have deserted practising their own duties, who are unkind and troublesome to others, and who are very excitable, envious and foolish are Mlechchh[15].

The meaning, essence and the theme of the word is very clear – one who violates one's dharm, harms others and is of weak moral character is a mlechchh.

[13] (Valmiki Ramayan 2-19-31)
[14] (ShukrNiti 1/75-76)
[15] (ShukrNiti 1/87-88)

Multiculturalism: Lauding Greek, belittling Sanskrit The hostilityto Sanskrit and its associated heritage becomes palpable when one compares

the differential treatment given to them viz- àvizAbrahamic traditions. The reductionist approach of NCERT has been to delegitimise the significance of Sanskrit by asserting it to be a tool of divisiveness. But the truth is that it has been acting as a vehicle for unification over a vast region. Its influence in pre-colonial era extended to entire Asia and more prominently in South and South-East Asia. This spectacular pan-Asia spread was not a result of a military conquest or Jihad in which local cultures were decimated to be replaced by a monoculture. Sanskrit acted like a membrane across which social exchange took place by permeating from both the sides. This matchless achievement of Sanskrit and Brahmans has been presented by NCERT authors in their own prejudiced style.

"THE INTEGRATION OF CULTS – Historians who have tried to understand these developments suggest that there were at least two processes at work. One was a process of disseminating Brahmanical ideas. This is exemplified by the composition, compilation and preservation of Puranic texts in simple Sanskrit verse, explicitly meant to be accessible to women and Shudras, who were generally excluded from Vedic learning.At the same time, there was a second process at work – that of the Brahmanas accepting and reworking the beliefs and practices of these and other social categories. In fact, many beliefs and practices were shaped through a continuous dialogue between what sociologists have described as "great" Sanskritic Puranic traditions and "little" traditions throughout the land.

While scholars accept the significance of these categories and processes, they are often *uncomfortable* with the hierarchy suggested by the terms great and little. The use of quotation marks is one way of indicating this."

NCERT, class 11th, p 141

Who are these 'scholars' who become 'uncomfortable' with hierarchy can be anybody's guess. This very bunch of authors is all praise for Roman Empire for its pluralism.

"Throughout the area underAlexander's control, ideals and cultural traditions were shared amongst the Greeks and the localpopulation. The regiononthe whole became 'Hellenised' (the Greeks were called Hellenes),

and Greek became a well-known language throughout…You will see that the empire embraced a wealth of local cultures and languages."

NCERT, class 11th, p 50, 58

Same doublespeak is visible on part of NCERT authors when describing plurality of languages or cultures.
"The cultural diversity of the empire was reflected in many ways and at many levels: in the vast diversity of religious cults and local deities; the plurality of languages that were spoken; the styles of dress and costume, the food people ate, their forms of social organization (tribal/non-tribal), even their patterns of settlement."
NCERT, class 11th, p 65

While diversity is being projected as a virtue of Roman Empire, when it comes to Indic traditions, this very plurality is projected as hostility. Existence of multiple traditions is depicted as 'evidence' for 'growing differentiation'.

"What is *evident is that* there was a growing differentiation amongst people engaged in agriculture – *stories*, especially within the Buddhist tradition, refer to landless agricultural labourers, small peasants, as well as large landholders. The term gahapati was often used in Pali texts to designate the second and third categories. The large landholders, as well as the village headman (whose position was often hereditary), emerged as powerful figures, and often exercised control over other cultivators. Early Tamil literature (the Sangam texts) also mentions different categories of people living in the villages – large landowners or vellalar, ploughmen or uzhavar and slaves or adimai. *It is likely* that these differences were based on differential access to land, labour and some of the new technologies. In such a situation, questions of control over land *must have become crucial*, as these were often discussed in legal texts."

NCERT, class 12th, p 39

Once again notice that in order to plant their biases, they start with an uncertain assumption by writing 'it is likely' and then, without giving any evidence, it turns to 'must have become'. Their own assumption is planted as a certainty. But in this passage, our point is a different one. Look at the languages and traditions in which the 'atrocities'are expressed: Pali and Tamil. By shrewd use of words, Sanskrit writings are depicted as manuals of exploitation. To enhance the perception of a linguistic conflict, Pali and Tamil writings are indicated as recording this exploitationfrom the victim's perspective.

Cherry picking to vilify Sanskrit texts

This association ofSanskrit literature and scriptures withexploitation is followed by a box titled source 6, in which the NCERT authors state that:

The Manusmrti is one of the best-known *legal texts* of early India, written in Sanskrit and compiled between c. second century BCE and c. second century CE. This is what the text advises the king to do: Seeing that in the world controversies constantly arise due to the ignorance of boundaries, he should …have … concealed boundary markers buried – stones, bones, cow's hair, chaff, ashes, potsherds, dried cow dung, bricks, coal, pebbles and sand. He should also have other similar substances that would not decay in the soil buried as hidden markers at the intersection of boundaries.

NCERT, class 12th, p 39 It is followed up by a teaser –"Would these boundary markers have been adequate to resolve disputes?"

A more insidious trick is being used here. The verse from Manusmriti has been cherry picked to depict as if only hidden markers were used in such a manner that when a dispute arose, 'control of land' was taken over by big landlords.

When the student will read the above passage, his impression will be that of a primitive society that depended on primitive markers for demarcation. More importantly, sage Manu will appear like a dumb or a wily person who thought that hidden markers would prevent controversies. The fact is that the verse presented by NCERT authors is just one in a series that suggests

demarcation of boundaries to a king. The directions given in Manusmriti are elaborate enough to clearly demarcate the boundaries of a kingdom and realistic enough to prevent frequent disputes. It suggests a pragmatic approachthat involves hiddenand visible markers. (Hymns 245 – 249)

“For any dispute related to boundaries of two villages, the decision should be made in the month of ‘Jyeshth’ when the boundary marks are clearly visible (for disputes where it is not possible during rainy seasons etc.)”

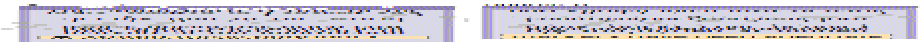


Figure 8 : NCERT, class 12th “To have clear demarcation of boundaries, the king should get trees like Peepal, Dhaak, Semal, Bad, Saal or other latex producing trees planted along the boundaries. Different types of bushes, creepers, bamboos should be planted along the borders. If done in this manner, the boundaries do not disappear.” “Since boundary disputes are very frequent between kingdoms, therefore, taking this fact into consideration, he should ensure other demarcations. These demarcations should be done secretly with substances which are not easily degradable with the ravages of time and weather like; rocks, bones, hair of cow or other cattle, skulls, drydung, bricks, coal,

sand, pebbles etc.” “If there is still some doubt, even after the boundarymarkers have been identified, then the boundary dispute should be solved with the help of eye-witnesses.”
“The king should summon respectable residents of the village at the spot of dispute, in front of the opposing parties and ask them about the borders[16].”

[16] (Manusmriti, p. 245)

By picking one verse, NCERT authors are creating an impression that marking of boundaries, as suggested by Manusmriti, was some kind of a mischief, perhaps to appropriate land.

Using Buddhism and Jainism to run down Sanskrit Buddhism and Jainism are projected as philosophies that rose due to dissatisfaction with Vedic traditions prevalent at that time. At first look, it seems that the authors

are revering Gautam Buddh and Mahavir. But, an objective analysis makes it clear that Buddhism and Jainism are used only to run down Hinduism. The hypocrisy of NCERT authors with reference to Jainism and Buddhism comes to the fore when theytalk of world civilizations. Islam and Chrisitianity are presented as 'religions with mass appeal', but none of these autochthonous belief systems are found worthy even of a passing reference.

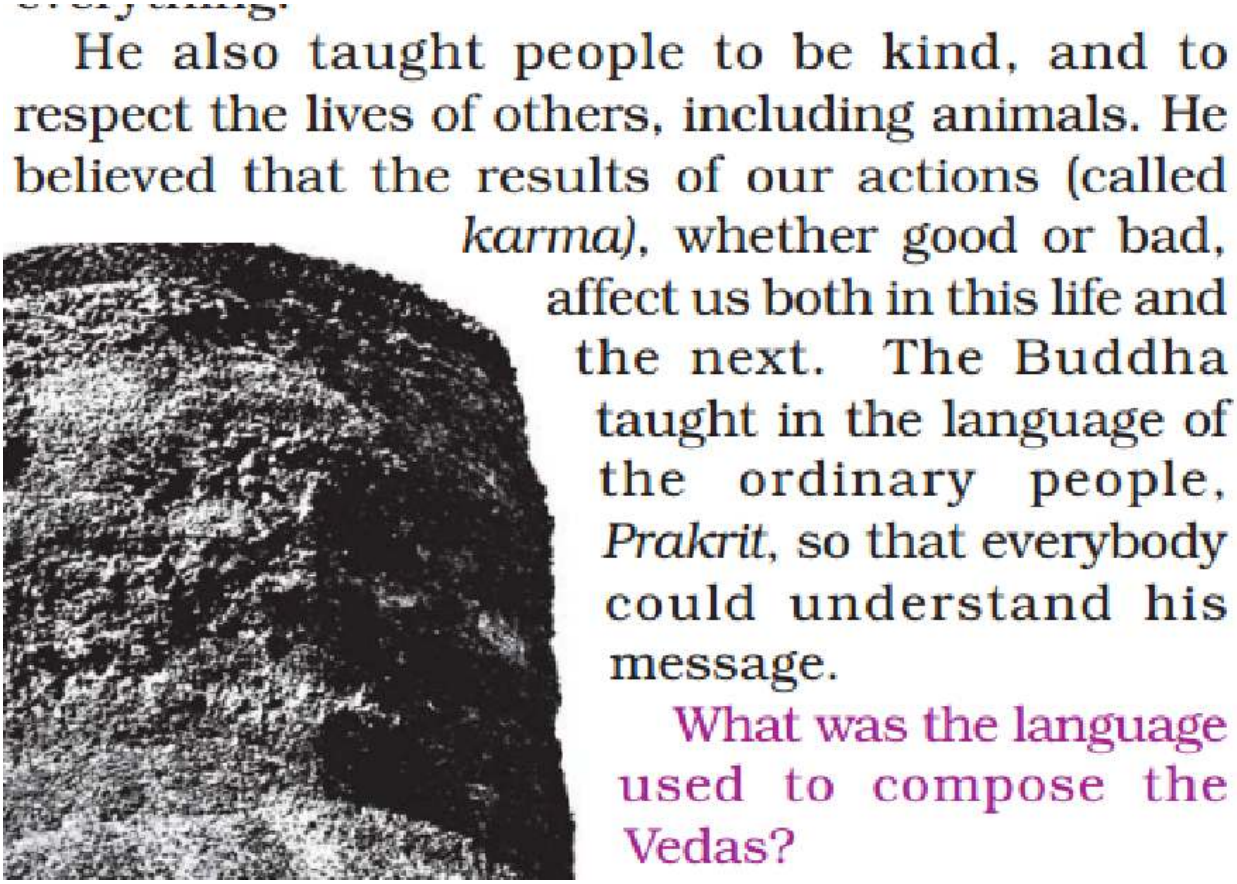
"Religions that appealed to people of different ethnic origins, who often spoke different languages, were important in the making of large empires. This was true in the case of Christianity (which originated in Palestine in the early first century CE) and Islam (which originated in the seventh century CE)."

NCERT, class 11th, p 53

In the eyes of NCERT authors, Buddhism is not a religion that appealed to people of different ethnic origins. History is a witness that Buddhism spread in a vast geographical area spanning different continents and appealed to the people belonging to diverse ethnic and geographical origins, including Afghans, Turks, Mongols, Sumatrans and Chinese. Spectacular as this spread was, it did not take place under the shadow of swords. It did not require Crusaders or Jihadis to harangue, torture and burn the defeated populace in order to make them submit to Buddhism. However, the NCERT historytextbooks just ignore this unique achievement. Instead, Buddh and Mahavir are used as ploys to run down Sanskrit by depicting it as an elitist language. Regarding Buddh, the NCERT books say:

He also taught people to be kind, and to respect the lives of others, including animals. He believed that the results of our actions (called karma), whether good or bad, affect us both in this life and the next. The Buddha taught in the language of the ordinary people, Prakrit, so that everybody could understand his message.

NCERT, class 6th, p 66


He also taught people to be kind, and to respect the lives of others, including animals. He believed that the results of our actions (called *karma*), whether good or bad, affect us both in this life and the next. The Buddha taught in the language of the ordinary people, *Prakrit*, so that everybody could understand his message.
What was the language used to compose the Vedas?
Figure 9

Perhaps suspecting that the students may be too young and miss the point, the authors of NCERT books have immediately asked them:

What was the language used to compose the Vedas? NCERT, class 6th, p 66

The same ruse has been used while elucidating Mahavir: He taught a simple doctrine: men and women who wished to know the truth must leave their homes. They must follow very strictly the rules of ahimsa, which means not hurting or killing living beings. “Allbeings,” said Mahavira “long tolive. To all things life is dear.” Ordinary people could understand the teachings of Mahavira and his followers, because they used Prakrit.

NCERT, class 6th, p 66

Goebbles, the infamous propaganda minister of the Nazis, had been chosen for the job because he had understood the limitations of human mind. He

knew the basic principle of creating perceptions. According to him,

“The most brilliant propagandist technique will yield no success unless one fundamental principle is borne in mind constantly - it must confine itself to a few points and repeat them over and over.”

The brains behind the NCERTbooks must be credited with thorough knowledge of this maxim. So, we find the same line of thought being repeatedly hammered in.

“Kalidasa is known for his plays depicting life in the king’s court. An interesting feature about these plays is that the king and most Brahmins are shown as speaking Sanskrit, while women and men other than the king and Brahmins use Prakrit.”

NCERT, class 6th, p 118 **Delinking Indian languages from Sanskrit**

The most boorish and intellectuallyimpoverished attack on Sanskrit is in the text of class 7th. In the passage, the authors hem and haw to delegitimise the influence of Sanskrit on Bengali language. The content of the following passage is convoluted to somehow stamp the idea that Bengali has no relation to Sanskrit and if it has, then it has a sinister dimension to it. Moreover, it has an almost similar relation with other languages as well.
“As we saw at the outset, we often tend to identify regions in terms of the language spoken bythe people. So, we assume that people in Bengal always spoke Bengali. However, what is interesting is that while Bengali is now recognised as a language derived from Sanskrit, early Sanskrit texts (midfirst millennium BCE) *suggest* that the people of Bengal did not speak Sanskritic languages.”

The authors weave a wild theory out of thin air on the basis of a *suggestion*. Then they continue using wild assumptions:

“How, then, did the new language emerge? From the fourththird centuries BCE, commercial ties began to develop between Bengal and Magadha (south Bihar), which*may have led to* the growing influence of Sanskrit.”

From *suggestion*, they jump to *may have led to*. And then, in third step, they conclude by using *Thus*:
"During the fourth century the Gupta rulers established political control over north Bengal and began to settle Brahmanas in this area. *Thus*, the linguistic and cultural influence from the mid-Ganga valley became stronger."

A suggestion is first transformed to a possibility and then turned into certainty by using 'Thus'. This theorem of spinning conjectures and then turning them into a fact, without presenting any evidence is used repeatedly by NCERT authors. But this is not the end of their scheme. They keep on hemming and hawing.

"In the seventh century the Chinese traveller Xuan Zang observed that languages related to Sanskrit were in use all over Bengal. From the eighth century, Bengal became the centre of a regional kingdom under the Palas (Chapter 2). Between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries, Bengal was ruled by Sultans who were independent of the rulers in Delhi (Chapter 3). In 1586, when Akbar conquered Bengal, it formed the nucleus of the Bengal suba. While Persian was the language of administration, Bengali developed as a regional language. In fact by the fifteenth centurythe Bengali group of dialects came to be united by a common literary language based on the spoken language of the western part of the region, now known as West Bengal. Thus, although Bengali is derived from Sanskrit, it passed through several stages of evolution.Also, a wide range of non-Sanskrit words, derived from a variety of sources including tribal languages, Persian, and European languages, have become part of modern Bengali."

After all these conjectures and weaving deceitful narrative, at last, their malicious intent is overtly stated – Bengali is not a "Sanskritic" language. The NCERT aim, like in other instances, is to create an alienated identityfor Bengalis. Everylanguage borrows words from other languages but it does not mean that the borrowing transforms its ancestry. So, can English be delinked from its Germanic ancestry because it borrows some words from Mandarin? Maybe next, the NCERT authors will label English as a Chinese language and its Germanic influence as some kind of imperialism. To keep

the narrative thoroughly disoriented, the NCERT authors throw in the term ‘tribal languages’.

If that is not enough, they hem and haw still more; this time to establish the ‘theory’ that Brahmans were not welcome in Bengal. “Early Bengali literature may be divided into two categories
– one indebted to Sanskrit and the other independent of it. The first includes translations of the Sanskrit epics, the Mangalakavyas (literallyauspicious poems, dealing with local deities) and bhakti literature such as the biographies of Chaitanyadeva, the leader of the Vaishnava bhakti movement (Chapter 8). The second includes Nath literature such as the songs of Maynamati and Gopichandra, stories concerning the worship of Dharma Thakur, and fairy tales, folk tales and ballads. The texts belonging to the first category are easier to date, as several manuscripts have been found indicating that they were composed between the late fifteenth and mid-eighteenth centuries. Those belonging to the second categorycirculated orallyand cannot be preciselydated. They were particularly popular in eastern Bengal, where the influence of Brahmanas was relatively weak.”

NCERT, class 7th, p 30

The content of these two pages of class 7th book are designed to antagonise Bengalis, to cleave them from Sanskrit and its allied traditional values. Add to it the earlier passages that were aimed at South India, Jharkhand and North-East, and the agenda becomes apparent. These books are designed to fragment society by dissociating it from its centuries-old roots.Apart from regional and linguistic fault lines, these books are encouraging fault lines among sects, which are being nourished and broadened by using ‘Sanskrit versus non-Sanskrit’ paradigm.

In all the above examples, Sanskrit is paired with an idea or a trait that is bound to elicit a negative response. Readers should also bear in mind that the above cited examples are illustrative and not exhaustive. The mendacity with which this pairing is done is so subtle that the students will develop revulsion for Sanskrit, but will be unable to pinpoint the reason for it. Of course, the impact varies from person to person but the malafide intent with

which it has been done by NCERT authors is plainly evident, when examined critically.

CHAPTER 3 Breaking the Civilizational Contiguity

During the colonial times, the Europeans concocted various 'invasion theories'. It was a template designed to legitimise the colonial invasion that projected Europeans as the latest invaders in a series of incursions. Each invader pushed the indigenous population down the social order, establishing themselves at the top of the hierarchy. The result was a stratification of society into antagonistic groups.

Unfortunately, these socially disruptive theories have survived the colonial era and still dictate the political discourse of many erstwhile colonies. In Rwanda, this disruption led to large-scale bloodshed and rapine. The Indian version of this template was the Aryan Invasion Theory. It has produced a distorted version of 'selfidentity' for many social groups. These groups have a magnified sense of victimhood, resulting in simmering discontent, which can be, and is being, used by parochial politicians and subversive forces.

Although discredited, the NCERT peddles this dated colonial construct as fact, albeit clandestinely.
T

he Aryan Invasion Theory (AIT) is the bedrock on which the NCERT builds up its divisive history – compartmentalising different sections of society, and seeding hatred in children's minds. Recent archaeological and scientific findings, like genetic make-up of population and landsat imagery, have refuted theAIT. This theory was always a suspect and questioned and rejected by non-political historians, archaeologists and eminent public figures. Aware of the debunking of theAIT myth and its corollary – TheAryan Migration Theory (AMT) – the NCERT still carries the 18th century colonial construct, but in a roundabout manner. This time around, NCERT authors use the quotes of 18th and 19th century "social reformers" to plant the AIT in school textbooks.

The main postulates of the dated AIT and AMT go like this: There was a race of nomadic people who called themselves Aryans
These Aryans came from outside India, probably Central Asia or Europe
They attacked, slaughtered, defeated and subjugated the original inhabitants.
Then they established their own civilization and forced it upon the 'natives'.
The softer version AMT is that they migrated from their original homeland and first settled in the North-West India, slowly replacing the original inhabitants who are termed as Dravidians. These 'original inhabitants' were not only pushed towards South India, but also down the social hierarchy.
They brought with them what can now be labelled IndoEuropean languages. Sanskrit is part of this language family. In contrast, the locals had non-Sanskritic languages. Aryans comprised white skinned people who subjugated the native darker complexioned people as lower castes. Four main castes were formulated and the natives were pushed to the lowest strata. Aryans exploited the locals for thousands of years.

Invasion theory: the standard colonial template

There is a vivid imagery associated with AIT and AMT, and interestingly, it shares the underlying assumptions with several other historical narratives constructed during colonial times for indigenous populations across their colonies in the 18th, 19th and well into the 20th century. Most of these theories were used to divide and justify European rule over the locals. But, even after the end of colonialism, these theories continue to play havoc with the local culture and social cohesion of the erstwhile colonised people.
As far as disruptive history teaching is concerned, a perusal of recent history tells us that the current NCERT textbooks are not a unique case. We have precedents in which the contents of history textbooks were manipulated to create disruptions in society. The genocide in Rwanda, which took place in the decade of 1990s, provides one such example. Considerable research has been carried out to find out the reasons behind the massacre of 8,00,000 Tutsi at the hands of another section of the population[1]. This exhaustive research has established that the genocide was not a sudden or spontaneous incident but a result of a long-drawn process.Aprocess in which history textbooks were used as a tool to create exclusive identities among the people of Rwanda. The Rwandan population consists of three sections, Hutus, Tutsis and Twas. In 1930s, when the population of Rwanda was registered

on the basis of these identities, about 84% of them were Hutu, 15% Tutsi and remaining 1% Twa[2]. Although these terms were in use since antiquity, this classification never had any racial origins or overtones. It was a social classification depending on the number of cattle owned by a person or a group. A review of major educational policies and

[1] (http://www.unitedhumanrights.org/genocide/genocide_in_ rwanda.htm)

programmes implemented between 1962 and 1994 reveals that the content and structure of schools reflected and amplified horizontal inequalities in societyand contributed to categorising, collectivising, and stigmatising Hutu and Tutsi into exclusive groups[3].

Although the period of 1962-1994 corresponds to post-colonial Rwanda, to delink the contents of this time from the colonial historiography will be a fatal mistake because it was during the colonial era that such binary identities were frozen.After the colonial rulers left, the indigenous Rwandan academicians picked up the threads from there itself. This process of segregating identities into watertight compartments contributed to a foundationonwhichviolent intergroup conflict became possible.

The concept of ethnicity and the version of Rwandan history propagated by missionaries, over a period of time, affected how the Rwandans perceived their own identities[4]. A thorough analysis of the Rwandan textbooks shows that the version of history created by missionaries during the colonial rule ignored the spiritual and traditional aspects prevalent in ancient Rwanda—including their agriculture, livestock and handicrafts. Their religion, their beliefs and even their dance forms were underplayed since the aim of history writers was to convert Rwandans to Christianity[5].

During the German colonial rule and after the First World War, during the Belgian colonial times, missionaries were the first to start writing the history of Rwanda. Their aim was to convert the natives to Christianity, as quickly as possible[6]. Till then, the Rwandans had relied primarily on oral history.

[3] (From Classrooms to Conflict in Rwanda, p. 107)

[4] (Christianity and Genocide in Rwanda, p. 65)

[5] (MÉMOIRES ET HISTOIRE SCOLAIRE :LE CAS DU RWANDADE 1962 À 1994, p. 76)

[6] (Gasanabo, 2004, p. 73)

The European clergy and academics collaborated to produce the first written histories of Rwanda. The collaboration resulted in a sophisticated and convincing, but inaccurate history that simultaneouslyserved interests of the elites of Rwanda and validated European assumptions. According to these accounts, the contemporary population of Rwanda consisted of three sections of society. The indigenous residents were called Twa, who were hunters and gatherers. The Hutu cultivators then arrived from North and as theywere more enterprising, theydisplaced Twas, cleared the forests and settled in Rwanda. The next invasion was by another group called Tutsis, who were smarter and militarily more capable. These 'ruthless Tutsi' descended from the north and conquered simpleminded Hutus by their wickedness and superior arms[7].

Belgians simply created a registry of their subjects in 1930s. This ended the fluidity in which a Hutu could become a Tutsi and vice versa. The identities lost their flexibility and over a period gained so much permanence and rigidity that Europeans started considering them as 'castes'[8].

The Hutu regime in post-colonial Rwanda used historytextbooks to further strengthen these identities in order to generate hatred against Tutsis.According tothis history, the Tutsis were projected as cunning and deceitful who had perpetrated atrocities against Hutus in the past. Three decades of propagation of this version of historycreated sufficient discontent against imaginary atrocities that it culminated in the unfortunate genocide that the world witnessed in 1994 and after.

The undertone of prevalent NCERT books is not much different. Different identities antagonistic to each other are being fostered

[7] (Forges, Alison Des, 1999, p. 37)

and fossilised tocreate social unrest. Everything belonging to ancient India is either being downplayed or denigrated. This has been done by systematically

targeting every aspect of ancient heritage of the country, which can be a source of pride and respect.

This version of history, which was in circulation since colonial times, has gained more currency in the past ten years. It is strengthening stereotypes created by evangelists and colonial masters. This interpretation of Indian history, which supported and served the purpose of missionaries, emphasizes separate origins of Brahmans
– racially, as well as, geographically. Brahmans are portrayed as outsiders who took control of the region and became de facto rulers by their cunningness. The rule that they fostered on the subjugated population was feudal, exploitative and oppressive to 'lower castes', 'Dravidians', and 'tribals'. Regional politicians added another element to this false narrative that Brahmans were in league with colonial rulers, or vice versa. Exactlysame historiographywas used in Rwanda to create fissures in society by portraying one section of the population as invaders who had displaced the original natives[9].

The processes similar to the ones that shaped the historiography of Rwanda had started in India much earlier. Ever since Britishers gained a firm footing in the middle of eighteenth century, the colonial academicians were trying to understand Indian society, including its languages and metaphysics. They were encountering a civilization that did not fit into their cosmology. As a result, their reactions to unfamiliar phenomena were quite dramatic. For our discussion, we will focus on their reactions to two different phenomena – Sanskrit and Harappa.

[9] (Paper commissioned for the EFA(education for all) Global Monitoring Report 2011, The hidden crisis: Armed conflict and education, p. 231)

Both these entities baffled the colonialists; Sanskrit language and Harappan civilizationhad a structure far more superior and advanced than anything that they had encountered or thought of. Their encounter with Sanskrit started in the eighteenth century whereas Harappa was found onlyin the earlytwentieth century. The response and treatment to both these phenomena was also markedlydifferent.

The entire Vedic corpus and other Sanskrit scriptures abounded in spirituality and metaphysics which the Europeans had not come across anywhere else. Accepting that such sublime ideas could come from people under their subjugation did not fit into the worldview of colonialists, thus efforts were initiated to somehow fit Sanskrit into this worldview. The Sanskrit word Arya, which means a person endowed with noble qualities, was changed to 'Aryan' and a theory was created to suggest that a group of people, who called themselves 'Aryans', invaded India in remote past and conquered it. These Aryans had originated in Europe or Central Asia. After coming to India, the qualities that they possessed declined due to their racial intermixing with the indigenous people of India. This theory called 'Aryan Invasion Theory' gained steam by the fact that it was being propagated by the rulers and administrators.

The accidental discoveryof ruins of cities called Harappa and Mohen Jodaroin the earlytwentieth centuryled to more speculative theories. The discoverers were surprised at the sophistication and architecture of these cities. The antiquity of these cities, as well as subsequently discovered other urban centres, defied the European or JudeoBiblical dateline.

The problem of dateline

According to Bible, the beginning of world started with the creation ofAdam and Eve, and the progeny of this first couple has populated the entire earth. It is through Bible that the lineage of Jesus Christ is traced through his father Joseph to the famous king David, from David to Abraham and ultimately to Adam[10]. This genealogy proclaims seventy one ancestors between Jesus andAdam (As per one of the several versions in Bible). Taking into account the life spans of different persons as mentioned in Bible and extrapolating the missing informationwiththe average life spanofa healthyhuman, different Christologists have tried to surmise about the date on which the Biblical God created the world. With minor variations, most of these people agree that the earth and humanity came into existence around 6,000 years ago.

This gives rise to a peculiar problem for those theologians and academicians, who consider Bible to be unerring by virtue of being the 'word of God'. This conditioning is so strong that even those persons who pursue secular fields of study, like physics and astronomy, have not been able to free themselves of

such biases. Persons as eminent as Isaac Newton and Johannes Kepler, who generallywould be assumed as objective intheir approach, subscribed to the Biblical worldview and accordingly gave 4000 BC and 3977 BC, respectively[11], as the years of origin of earth and all its life forms. If they agree to existence of any civilization or life form which has continuityolder than 6,000 years, then theyhave to admit the fallibility of Bible and consequently, the entire edifice of Christianity will crumble. In order to resolve this cognitive dissonance, some of them resort to outright denial of the existence of such civilizations or try to postdate them so as to fit them into the Judeo-Biblical framework.
Compelled to maintain the supremacy of 'White Christian civilization', the colonial intellectuals delinked Sanskrit and Harappan

[10] (Bible, Matthew, 3:38)
[11] (Experimenting On ASmall Planet, p. 63)

civilization. To fortify this assertion, many theories were floated. One of them was that the original inhabitants of these cities were dark skinned who were attacked, subdued, subjugated and enslaved by'Aryans'. These 'original' inhabitants were labelled 'Dravidians' by the colonial and evangelical scholars. The same template was used in Rwanda to brand Tutsis as invaders and Hutus as 'original' inhabitants.

When John Playfair, the eighteenth century astronomer, suggested that the astronomical tables used by Hindus were far more sophisticated than the ones being used anywhere else, his stance was considered dangerous for the survival of Christianity as a religion. He emphatically stated that the astronomical tables of the Hindus start from an epoch called Kaliyug, whose onset is 3102 years before the contemporary era. He was a mathematician and a geologist who studied various astronomical tables which were in practice in different parts of India. He concluded that since the astronomy of Brahmans was highly refined at the onset of Kaliyug, it must have originated at a date much more anterior to it.

"The tables ofTirvalore, however, though they differ in form very much from those formerly described, agree with them perfectly in many of their

elements. They suppose the same length of the year, the same mean motions, and the same inequalities of the sun and the moon, and they are adapted nearly to the same meridian. But a circumstance in which they seem to differ materially from the rest is, the antiquity of the epoch from which they take their date, the year 3102 before the Christian era. We must, therefore, enquire, whether this epoch is real or fictitious, that is, whether it has been determined byactual observation, or has been calculated from the modern epochs of the other tables. For it may naturally be supposed, that the Brahmins, having made observations in later times, or having borrowed from the astronomical knowledge of other nations, have imagined to themselves a fictitious epoch, coinciding with the celebrated era of the Calyougham, to which, through vanity or superstition, they have referred the places of the heavenly bodies, and have only calculated what they pretend that their ancestors observed.
In doing this, however, the Brahmins must have furnished us with means, almost infallible, of detecting their imposture. It is only for astronomy, in its most perfect state, to go back to the distance of forty-six centuries, and to ascertain the situation of the heavenly bodies at so remote a period. The modern astronomy of Europe, with all the accuracy that it derives from the telescope and the pendulum, could not venture on so difficult a task, were it not assisted by the theory of gravitation, and had not the integral calculus, after a hundred years of almost continual improvement, been able, at last, to determine the disturbances in our system, which arise from the action of the planets on one another[12].”

Playfair stated that highly advanced mathematics and astronomy of Hindus were significant comments on the progress of science during ancient times.

“That observations made in India, when all Europe was barbarous or uninhabited, and investigations into the most subtle effects of gravitation made in Europe, near five thousand years afterwards, should thus come inmutualsupport of one another, is perhaps the most striking example of the progress and vicissitude of science, which the history of mankind has yet exhibited[13].”

[12] (Dharampal, p. 61)
[13] Ibid p. 68

He subjected the astronomical tables used by Hindus to a rigorous scrutiny on different parameters, including the length of tropical year, the equation of the sun's centre and the obliquityof the ecliptic. According to him, it is natural to conclude, that the determination of the solar year by Hindus is as ancient as the year 1200 before the Calyougham (Kaliyug) or 4300 before the Christian era[14].

Playfair died in 1819 and six years later, another astronomer John Bentley tried to refute his claims regarding the antiquity of Hindu astronomy. On the stand of Playfair, Bentley writes:

"Byhis attempt to uphold the antiquityofHindu books against absolute facts, he thereby supports all those horrid abuses and impositions found in them, under the pretended sanction of the antiquity, viz. The burning of widows, the destroying of infants and the immolation of men. Nay, his aim goes still deeper; for by the same means he endeavors to overturn the Mosaic account, and sap the very foundation of our religion: for if we are to believe in the antiquity of Hindu books, as he would wish us, then the mosaic account is all a fable, or a fiction[15]."

Bear in mind that these are the words of an astronomer who is supposed to be an objective scientist. He is basing his refutation of the antiquityofHindu astronomyjust because accepting it willdestroy the foundation on which Christianity is standing. Non-scientific and fictitious arguments like "widow burning" and "destroying ofinfants" are used whereas no scientific evidence has been put forward to refute the antiquityof Hindu astronomy. But still, his line of thinking has prevailed whereas the scientific and logical standpoint of Playfair has been wiped out as an inconvenient truth.

[14] Ibid p. 69
[15] (A Historical View of Hindu Astronomy, p. xxvii)

Furthering the colonial agenda

When Harrappa and Mohen Jodaro were excavated, they were just the

proverbial tips of the iceberg. Today we know that these two were among many such cities that thrived along the banks of Sarasvati and the Indus River. The colonial masters deployed two tricks to undermine the achievements of this civilization. They delinked it from the present civilization of India byportraying it as a dead civilization and simultaneously, its time period was postdated to fit it into the Western framework. The reasons for these twofold tricks are not hard to understand:Adead civilization does not offer any competition to a surviving one, therefore, is not a threat to the ideological survival of a living civilization and at the same time postdating it bya few centuries enabled the Christian colonialists to still proclaim the legitimacy of Biblical mythology. This is exactly what the authors of the current NCERT books do. They disregard the literary, archaeological and historical facts to peddle the obsolete theory of colonial times. The age of Harappa and other cities has been postdated.

"About eighty years ago, archaeologists found the site, and realized that this was one of the oldest cities in the subcontinent. As this was the first city to be discovered, all other sites from where similar buildings (and other things) were found were described as Harappan. *These cities developed about 4700 years ago*."

NCERT class 6th, p 32 After this, the NCERT books suggest that these magnificent cities lasted for about 800 years.

"Around 3900 years ago we find the beginning of a major change. People stopped living in many of the cities. Writing, seals and weights were no longer used. Raw materials brought from long distances became rare. In Mohenjodaro, we find that garbage piled up on the streets, the drainage system broke down, and new, less impressive houses were built, even over the streets. Why did all this happen? We are not sure. Some scholars *suggest* that the rivers dried up. Others *suggest* that there was deforestation. This *could have happened* because fuel was required for baking bricks, and for smelting copper ores. Besides, grazing bylarge herds of cattle, sheep and goat may have destroyed the green cover. In some areas there were floods. But none of these reasons can explain the end of *all* the cities.

Flooding, or a river drying up would have had an effect in only some areas. It *appears* as if the rulers lost control. In any case, the effects of the change are quite clear. Sites in Sind and west Punjab (present-dayPakistan) were abandoned, while manypeople moved into newer, smaller settlements to the east and the south. New cities emerged about 1400 years later. You will read about them in Chapters 6 and 9."

NCERT, class 6th, pp 40 – 41

Notice that the time of 'decline'is 3,900 years ago. Also notice the phrase 'appears as if the rulers lost control'. This vague statement is a deliberate ploy to create a knowledge gap which in later chapters is filled with AIT. In subsequent chapters and classes they use 'social reformers' like Periyar and Jyotirao Phule to categorically assert thatAryans destroyed the Harappan civilization. For instance, they have used quotations from Phule to insert AIT from the backdoor in the textbooks:

He set out to attack the Brahmans' claim that they were superior to others, since they were Aryans. Phule argued that theAryans were foreigners, who came from outside the subcontinent, and defeated and subjugated the true children of the country – those who had lived here from before the coming of theAryans.AsAryans established their dominance, they began looking at the defeated population as inferior, as low caste people… Phule claimed that before Aryan rule there existed a golden age.

NCERT, class 8th, p 117 Subsequently, the origin of Vedas is postdated to fit their origin into the narrow timeline of Bible.

"You may have heard about the Vedas. There are four of them – the Rigveda, Samaveda, Yajurveda andAtharvaveda. The oldest Veda is the Rigveda, composed about 3500 years ago. The Rigveda includes more than a thousand hymns, called sukta or "well-said". These hymns are in praise of various gods and goddesses. Three gods are especially important:Agni, the god of fire; Indra, the warrior god; and Soma, a plant from which a special drink was prepared.

These hymns were composed bysages (rishis). Priests taught students to recite and memorize each syllable, word, and sentence, bit by bit, with great care. Most of the hymns were composed, taught and learnt by men. Afew were composed by women. The Rigveda is in old or Vedic Sanskrit, which is different from the Sanskrit you learn in school these days."

NCERT, class 6th, p 43

The import of the above two passages by NCERT is – the composition of Vedas started 400 years after the disappearance of Harappancivilization. Thus, "Harappan civilization" is delinked from "Vedic civilization".Afurther implication is that there were no Rishis and Brahmans prior to this period. If it is so, then who were the creators of astronomical tables that Playfair has established are at least 4600 years old?

But it is not just a problem of finding justification to Playfair's assertions. Ever since the dubious Aryan Invasion Theory was proposed, there has been a stiff opposition to it. A curious feature of this debate is that although the theory is based on conjectures, yet, its refutation is factual and logical. As a result, it stands discredited. But, in India, it is still in history textbooks, albeit slyly.

Sarasvati-Indus or Harappan civilization?

The proponents of AIT have been arguing that since there is no Sarasvati, therefore the Vedas refer to a mythological river that never had any physical existence. The second argument is that Sarasvati refers to a mythological goddess of theAryans and not to a river.

The latest satellite images have shown the path of the now dried-up Sarasvati River. The paleo channels of this mighty river are seen beneath the Thar Desert in Rajasthan with the help of digital enhancement studies of IRS – 1C data[16].

Apart from the satellite imagery, the archaeological evidence also supports the existence of a mighty river that flowed through Himalayas, present

Punjab, Haryana and Rajasthan. Most of the sites belonging to Indus valley civilization or Harappa civilization are located on the Sarasvati river basin.[17]

[16] (R.B.Mandal, 2006, p. 28)

[17] (The Harappan Civilization and Myth of Aryan "Invasion")

Sarasvati

Picture : Spread of sites belonging to Indus–Sarasvati civilization

Such disappearance of a river is not unusual. The existence of lakes at Lunkaransar, Didwana and Sambhar, the Ranns of Jaisalmer and Pachpadra suggest that a tectonic event like a landslide or an earthquake cut off the river from its glacial source, leaving a number of notable lakes.

The problem that the satellite imagery, archaeological and hydrological evidences pose to the AIT is that according to the scientific evidences, the decline of Sarasvati River started as early as 5000 BCE and was almost complete by3000 BCE (by1800BCE, it had completely dried up), probably due to tectonic activity. It means that if we have to believe the AIT to be true, then we have to accept that a band of nomads attacked a flourishing civilization and annihilated it. After this, they sat down to create four sacred books in which they are revering a river that flowed in that geographical region, more than fifteen centuries before they came and conquered!
In the face of such strong evidence, the proponents of AIT gave another argument that probably Sarasvati is just another name of Indus. This argument was rebutted by the noted Sanskrit scholar Arthur MacDonnel

about a century ago when he said since Sarasvati is mentioned as a river having five tributaries and flowing through the 'Madhyadesh' or the 'middle country', it cannot be Indus.

"This passage militates against the view that Sarasvati was a name of the Indus, because the use of Desa here seems to indicate that the seer of the verse placed the Sarasvati in the Madhyadesa or Middle Country, to which all the geographical data of the Yajurvedas point.[18]"

In the face of such overwhelming evidence from all the allied fields, AIT does not have any legs to stand upon. Any honest academician or institute would never teachAIT as history. But, NCERT authors, it appears, have different priorities. Theyresort to surreptitious means to further this theory. While NCERT inserts the discredited AIT clandestinely, the more widely accepted 'Out of India'theory is totally ignored. According to this theory, Indians, over millennia, fanned out all over, spreading the Indic traditions, languages and culture worldwide. NCERTcould have maintained fair play and objectivity by allowing students to be aware of the scientific theory validating the notions that Indians migrated towards west, taking with them their language and religion in the vast empty lands of Central Asia and Europe. Alternately, theycould have also shared the views of Dr.Ambedkar or Dayanand Sarasvati on AIT.

Misrepresenting the Indic traditions

[18] (Vedic Index of Names and Subjects, p. 379)

There is a lot of circumstantial evidence to suggest that the present Vedic-Hindu civilization is a continuity of Harappa or Sarasvati civilization. For example, the seals found at the archaeological sites show a 'Yogi'sitting in lotus pose, which resembles the depiction of Shiv. Instead of showing present Indian society as a continuum predating Harappa, every effort is made by NCERT to the contrary.

"Attempts have also been made to reconstruct religious beliefs and practices byexamining seals, some of which seem to depict ritual scenes. Others, with plant motifs, are thought to indicate nature worship. Some animals – such as the onehorned animal, often called the "unicorn" – depicted on seals seem to

be mythical, composite creatures. In some seals, a figure shown seated cross-legged in a "yogic" posture, sometimes surrounded by animals, has been regarded as a depiction of "proto-Shiva", that is, an early form of one of the major deities of Hinduism. Besides, conical stone objects have been classified as lingas. Many reconstructions of Harappan religion are made on the assumption that later traditions provide parallels with earlier ones. This is because archaeologists often move from the known to the unknown, that is, from the present to the past. While this is plausible in the case of stone querns and pots, it becomes more speculative when we extend it to "religious" symbols. Let us look, for instance, at the "proto-Shiva" seals. The earliest religious text, the Rigveda (*The earliest religious text, the Rigveda (1000 BCE*) mentions a god named Rudra, which is a name used for Shiva inlater Puranic traditions (inthe first millennium CE; see also Chapter 4). However, unlike Shiva, Rudra in the Rigveda is neither depicted as Pashupati (lord of animals in general and cattle in particular), nor as a yogi. In other words, this depiction does not match the description of Rudra in the Rigveda. Is this, then, *possibly* a shaman as some scholars have suggested?"

NCERT, class 12th, p 23

Such erroneous interpretation can stem from a lack of understanding of Sanskrit or disconnect with the authentic local traditions. This misunderstanding, and the resulting misrepresentation, can be seen running throughout the NCERT content. Generally, persons born in Abrahamic traditions tend to interpret the Indic traditions in this manner. In the Abrahamic monotheistic mindset, a God does not manifest in the cosmos but stays out of it. He does not transmutate and does not have many forms. But the Vedic concept of God is entirelydifferent from this rigid interpretation.The authors ofNCERT have failed to appreciate that a different name does not mean a different God. It can mean a different form in which Paramatma or Ishwar manifests. Or it can mean a different aspect or attribute of Paramatma. The unnecessary hairsplitting by NCERT authors appears childish or reductionist, when seen in the light of expositions given by authentic traditional scholars like Swami Dayanand Sarasvati.

l czãkl fo".kql #nzLl f' koLl kv{kjLe i je%LojkV~A l bUnzLl dkykfXuLl pUnzek%A[19]
An approximate English translation of this hymn would be:

As he is the creator of the cosmos, he is called 'Brahma', since he is omnipresent, he is called 'Vishnu', since he makes the wicked cry bypunishing them, he is called 'Rudr'and since he is benevolent for all, therefore he is called 'Shiv'. In short, it is the same Supreme Being who is called by different names, each of which refers to a different attribute of the same Paramatma.

[19] (Kaivalya Upanishad, Vol. 1, Hymn 8)

Thus, a different name for the same Supreme Being does not mean a new religion or a new deity but another attribute of that same God. But, NCERT authors deviously deconstruct the word and concept of Shiv only to delink the present Indian society from Harappan civilization.

The bogey of social reformers

Swami Dayanand Sarasvati, Swami Vivekanand and Dr Bhimrao Ambedkar belong to different time epochs in our history. They are not only separated by time and space, their thoughts also diverge from each other on a large number of issues. And yet, they have a very strong convergence on the issue of AIT. All of them have refuted it in their own styles. The NCERT authors have included them as social reformers but have deliberately suppressed their rebuttal of this theory.

Swami Dayanand Sarasvati had thoroughlyexposed the hollowness ofAIT by highlighting that if Vedas had been created by invading and victorious 'Aryans', then they must have glorified such a huge victory and they must have given some account of their homeland. Both these are natural tendencies for any victorious 'race' or 'community'. But the silence of Vedas on both these major counts indicates that there were never any 'invading Aryans'. In fact he has written the most logical and strong rebuttals to the biased interpretations ofVedas done bycolonial administrator Max Mueller.

SwamiVivekanand, who was familiar with the academic atmosphere of his times, rubbished the concept of 'invading Aryans'in his own charismatic

style.

“According to some, they came from central Tibet, others will have it, they came from centralAsia. There are patriotic English men who think that the Aryans were all red haired. If the writer happens to be a black haired man the Aryans were all black haired. Of late, there was an attempt to prove that the Aryans lived on the Swiss lakes. Some say now that they live at the North Pole. Lord bless the Aryans and their habitations. As for the truth of these theories, there is not one word in scriptures, not one, to prove that the Aryans ever came from anywhere outside of India and in ancient India was includedAfghanistan. There it ends.And the theory that the Shudra castes were all non-Aryans and they were a multitude, is equally illogical and equallyirrational[20].”

Dr BhimraoAmbedkar had studied these issues in depth and saw through the designs of the missionaries and evangelists in peddling this theory.

“That the theory of Aryan race setup by western writers falls to the ground at every point goes without saying. This is somewhat surprising since Western scholarship is usually associated with thorough research and careful analysis. Why has the theory failed? It is important to know the reasons why it has failed. Anyone who cares to scrutinize the theory will find that it suffers from a double infection. In the first place, the theoryis based on nothing but pleasing assumptions and inferences based on such assumptions. In the second place, the theory is a perversion of scientific investigation. It is not allowed to evolve out of facts. On the contrary the theory is preconceived and facts are selected to prove it. The theory of Aryan race is an assumption and no more[21].”

Although Dr Ambedkar has been given some space in the NCERT books but his views regarding AIT are completely suppressed. In contrast, those who had views in line with the agenda of NCERT authors are given disproportionately wide space in the books.

[20] (CWSV, volume 3, pp. 292 – 293)

[21] (Who Were The Sudras, Volume 1)

TheAIT became part of the mainstream curriculum when the British administrators took over the reign from East India Company and imposed the new education policy in India. As already mentioned, this theory came under severe criticism from Indians well versed with the traditions and history of India. But there was also a vast section of society that bit the bait ofAIT, hook, line and sinker. The success of the proponents ofAITlayin creating more suchindividuals as theycould be used as indigenous mouthpieces for the propagation of the mythical history. Such persons have been liberally quoted on the subject by NCERT authors.

"One of the most vocal amongst the 'low-caste' leaders was Jyotirao Phule. Born in 1827, he studied in schools set up by Christian missionaries. On growing up he developed his own ideas about the injustices of caste society.... According to Phule, the upper castes had no right to their land and power: in reality, the land belonged to indigenous people, the so called low castes. Phule claimed that beforeAryan rule there existed a golden age when warrior-peasants tilled the land and ruled the Maratha countryside in just and fair ways. He proposed that Shudras (labouring castes) and Ati Shudras (untouchables) should unite and challenge caste discrimination." NCERT, class 8^{th},p 117,

Although most of the educational institutes and historians concur that the colonial theory of 'Aryans' being invaders was an artificial construct to sow seeds of conflict among the 'natives' – yet, this disruptive theory, with all its implications, is being taught to impressionable young minds. Interestingly, while the NCERT authors use the artificialAryan-Native divide to project that Shudras were exploited byAryans, there are several hymns of Rigved regarding the welfare of Shudras. Obviously, NCERT doesn't pass this on to the students.
"O King! By providing the gift of true knowledge to those born to Shudra parents, make them enlightened and provide them with all sorts of wealth and comfort and provide happiness by getting rid of our enemies[22]."

Can such hymns come from the pen of a class that thinks evil of the downtrodden and intends to keep them in perpetual servitude? That too in their most revered scriptures?

"Phule was also critical of the anti-colonial *nationalism that was preached by upper-caste leaders*. He wrote: The Brahmans have hidden awaythe sword of their religion which has cut the throat of the peoples' prosperity and now go about posing as great patriots of their country. They … give this advice to ... our Shudra, Muslim and Parsi youth that unless we put away all quarrelling amongst ourselves about the divisions between high and low in our country and come together, our ... country will never make any progress ... It will be unity to serve their purposes, and then it will be me here and you over there again."

NCERT, class 8th, p 117

Nation's premier educational research organization, NCERT, presents Phule's erroneous opinion about the source of Indian nationalism as a fact. Such wicked portrayals are bound to create problems in inter-group relationships. Highlighting imaginarysocial divisions and then trying to establish them as historical truth, has a tendencyof entrenching collectivised and stigmatised social groups.

The verses from Rigved establish the fluidity of social system and the meritocracyassociated with it. The aim of providing these verses is to establish that, in theory, Brahmans had designed a system based on the propensity and ability of an individual. There may

[22] (Rigved, p. 6/22/10)

have been instances where an individual or a group of individuals may have deviated from this system. Such deviations may have led to exploitation of some sections of society. Such deviations should be considered as aberrations and not taught as a rule. Thus, the authors of the present book do not defend any atrocities that might have been committed by rogue individuals for their selfish aims, but at the same time teaching such perverted history to suit the political agenda is against the principles of academic honesty.

Everynow and then, NCERT authors are brazen enough to express their own biases directly.

"In the early twentieth century, the non-Brahman movement started. The initiative came from those non-Brahman castes that had acquired access to education, wealth and influence. They argued that Brahmans were heirs of Aryan invaders from the north who had conquered southern lands from the original inhabitants of the region – the indigenous Dravidian races. They also challenged Brahmanical claims to power." NCERT, class 8th, p 119

To camouflage the anti-Brahman agenda, the term 'non-Brahman' has been used as a euphemism for 'Anti-Brahman'. The entire paragraph is an ex cathedra sermon on the discredited AIT.

VD Savarkar, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Ishwar Chander Vidyasagar, Ram Mohan Roy, Swami Dayanand Sarasvati and M.K.Gandhi belonged to 'upper castes', but were champions of reformation against caste discrimination. Their contribution is being suppressed by NCERT to create a perception that society at large did nothing to uplift the downtrodden.

The NCERT authors seem to have picked up the threads from colonial times and carried these forward. The undermining of the Indus-Sarasvati civilization is being done in many ways. One of them is to create an impression that the achievements and technological innovations had their origins 'somewhere else'. As an example:

"Recent archaeological finds *suggest* that copper was also *probably* brought from Oman…Mesopotamian texts attributable to the third millennium BCE refer to copper coming from a region called Magan, *perhaps* a name for Oman" NCERT, class 12th ,p 13

From words 'suggest', 'probably' and 'perhaps', a 'historical fact' is created!

Ironically, in the preface of their books, NCERT authors claim these books to be based on a scientific approach. But in actual practice, the biases and whims of individuals – who somehow managed to sneak into the committee that decided the content of history books

– are being taught. These eminent historians have devised a good theorem that we have encountered earlier also. They start with vagueness or possibilityand then, without giving a shred of evidence, establish it as a fact.

Let us look at the findings of other historians regarding the same topic, i.e. the source of copper during the Indus-Sarasvati civilization period. In contrast to the hearsay being propagated by NCERT, the findings of Indian National Commission for History of Science are based on scientific methods and do not rely on conjectures. For the same period, they conclude that copper was indigenous as were the methods of preparation.

"According to the texts, Meluhha (Identified with the Harappan zone) exported a variety of timber, copper, gold dust, lapis lazuli, carnelian and other stones, ivory figurines of birds and monkeys, etc. Most of these items were available in India, except perhaps lapis lazuli. Baluchistan,Afghanistan, Oman and Rajasthan all have copper mines. Sixteen copper furnaces from Harappa, the copper workshops in Lothal, and the large quantities of copper oxide ore from a brick lined pit at Mohenjodaro all suggest that copper metallurgy was a developed craft in the Indus civilization[23].

The main Indian copper minerals are (a) chalcopyrite, (b) Chalcocite (c) malachite and (d) Azurite. The main copper mines are located in the 80km long Khetri belt in Rajasthan and the Singhbhum copper belt inBihar, which is 130km long. Other important deposits occur in the districts of Guntur, Arcot, and Kumaon. Sources in Baluchistan, such as Shah Maksud and Kalih Zeri, have also been mentioned as probable mines for Harappan copper[24].

We have also tried to use comparisons of trace impurity patterns between ores and artifacts. In both the Khetri (Rajasthan) ores and Harappan artifacts, gold is absent, but a number of other trace elements (silver, iron, arsenic, antimony, lead, bismuth, tin, nickel, zinc, manganese, cobalt, aluminium, copper, molybdenum, titanium, magnesium and vanadium) are present, suggesting the use of the Khetri ores by the Harappans. This method is not foolproof, and it is therefore hoped that results can be reconfirmed by the use of lead isotope ratio comparison between ores and artifacts and also bythe techniques used by Chernykh and Tarakhova. Circumstantially, Khetri mines

of Rajasthan are likelyto have been exploited by the Harappans, because they are found in roughly the same areas[25]."

[23] (History of Technology in India, Volume 1, From Antiquity to 1200 A.D., p. 29)
[24] Ibid p. 31
[25] Ibid p. 35

Conflating Arya with NaziAryan

During the colonial period, European "scholars" used and misquoted Indian scriptures, traditions and languages to propose manyscientific sounding, but baseless theories and hypothesis regarding origin of humanity. One of these was the "Aryan race" theory. Germans used it as a source of national inspiration. Their scholars, like Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel, Rudolph Grau, Joseph Gobineau and Chamberlain, created a politico-academic environment which was instrumental in the rise of Nazi worldview.

Despite their serious differences with each other, most of the nineteenth century scholars were bound by the dogma of providential or revealed Biblical history, which assumed that European Christians were inevitably superior to other civilizations because of god's invisible hand. This underlined belief retained its power even after European thinkers had adopted methods from positivism, natural sciences, and comparative studies. European wanted to think of themselves as evolved from the best aspects of both the Semites and the Aryans. Re-imagining their ethnic ancestry as Aryans went along with the contemporary intellectual explorations… Schlegel lived at a time when Germany and France were bitter enemies not only military and politically, but also culturally. France had the advantage of being seen as a renaissance nation and successor to the great ancient civilizations of Greece and Rome. Spain and Portugal had their own glorified identities as colonizers ofAmericas. Britain had India, the jewel in its crown, and the prosperous empire built around it. But Germany had none of these. Rather, Germans were described in French and other text books as barbarian tribes who had violently attacked and destroyed the great Roman civilization… Indologyenabled him to claim that German culture and feudal social structures had originated in ancient India, giving them a very respectable antiquity to counteract renaissance-based French supremacy.

Despite his rejection of India's religions and his conversion to Catholicism, Schlegel's Indian studies remained a critical way to blend German nationalism, medievalism, and Catholicism into his newly minted myth of Germany…Shlegel's first myth was built on India's historical role as the source of German greatness. He claimed that the ancestors of the modern Germans had migrated from India…the nobility of their ancestral character came from their Indian Aryan roots[26].

In second chapter, we had stated that the meaning of Sanskrit word 'Arya' is deliberately not explained to the students. It is done to create a knowledge gap which is used to the hilt in history books of 9thclass. By the time student reaches class 9th, he has been supplied with the information that Aryans were invaders who overran the Dravidians. So far, the NCERT authors were using the quotes of 'social reformers'like Phule and Periyar to peddle this theory. But now, they state it as a fact.

Nazi ideology was synonymous with Hitler's worldview. According to this there was no equality between people, but only a racial hierarchy. In this view blond, blue-eyed, Nordic German Aryans were at the top, while Jews were located at the lowest rung. They came to be regarded as an anti-race, the arch-enemies of the Aryans.

NCERT, class 9th, p 61

A class 9th student might miss the point, therefore, it is repeatedly hammered in with the help of a box which explains the meaning of this 'new' word:

[26] (Malhotra, Breaking India, 2011, pp. 19-21)

Nordic GermanAryans – One branch of those classified as Aryans. They lived in north European countries and had German or related origin.

NCERT, class 9th, p 61

Anyhistorian worth his salt willvouch that "Nordic GermanAryans" are not a historical fact but an artificial construct that was a product of the politics of the colonial period.Yet, children of our country are forced to read it as

history. In line with this obfuscating narrative, the holy symbol of Swastik has been used liberally to insinuate an Indic connection with Nazism.

“Hitler devised a new style of politics. He understood the significance of rituals and spectacle in mass mobilisation. Nazis held massive rallies and public meetings todemonstrate the suport for Hitler and instil a sense of unity among the people. The Red banners with the Swastika, the Nazi salute, and the ritualised rounds of applause after the speeches were all part of this spectacle of power”

NCERT, class 9th, p 57

At no point the NCERT authors clarify the differences between the Nazi symbolism and the Indic religious Swastik. Allowing for such ambiguityinschool textbooks is generallyabhorred world over. But, for the NCERT such an attempt is understandable – it matches with their general tone and agenda.

Like we earlier saw, the religious undertone in NCERT books is again at work here. While an Indic connection to the holocaust is being built, at the same time, running parallel to it, the NCERT authors try to minimise the Christian cause of anti-Semitism. Since its very beginning, Christian theology has targeted Jews, blaming them for the death of Jesus Christ. After Christianity became state religion in Europe, the persecution of Jews became institutionalised and widespread both in the Protestant and Catholic countries. For instance, the Inquisition, an institutional mechanism designed to eradicate heresy, as enshrined in Bible, persecuted Jews wherever Christians’ writ ran.

The fact is that Hitler was a devout Christian who was putting into practice what Church always endeavoured to achieve. In his own words:

The inheritance which has fallen to us is a terrible one. The task with which we are faced is the hardest which has fallen to German statesmen within the memory of man. But we are all filled with unbounded confidence for we believe in our people and their imperishable virtues. Every class and every individual must help us to found the new Reich. The National Government

will regard it as its first and foremost dutyto revive in the nation the spirit of unityand co-operation. It will preserve and defend those basic principles on which our nation has been built. It regards Christianity as the foundation of our national morality, and the family as the basis of national life[27].

When bishop Wilhelm Berning met him as a reperesentative of all the bishops of Germany, Hitler reiteriated:
"I have been attacked because of myhandling of the Jewish question. The Catholic Church considered the Jews pestilent for fifteen hundred years, put them in ghettos, etc., because it recognized the Jews for what they were. In the epoch of liberalism the danger was nolonger recognized. I am moving back toward the time in which a fifteen-hundred-year-long tradition was implemented. I do not set race over religion, but I recognize the representatives of this race as pestilent for the state and for the Church, and perhaps I am thereby

[27] (Hitler and the Nazi State, p. 177)

doing Christianity a great service by pushing them out of schools and public functions[28].

Yet, NCERT authors make every effort to shift gaze away from Christianity to elsewhere.
Jews remained the worst sufferers in Nazi Germany. Nazi hatred of Jews had a precursor in the traditional Christian hostilitytowards Jews. Theyhad been stereotyped as killers of Christ and usurers. Until medieval times Jews were barred from owning land. They survived mainly through trade and moneylending. They lived in separately marked areas called ghettos. They were often persecuted through periodic organised violence, and expulsion from the land. *However*, Hitler's hatred of Jews was based on pseudoscientific theories of race, which held that conversion was no solution to the Jewish problem. It could be solved only through their total elimination.
NCERT, class 9th, p 62

The testimony of Genetics

NCERT propagates AIT, which is based on conjectures of colonial

period, but ignores the findings of latest research. The theory is called Out of Africa theory. The proponents of this theory back their claim with scientific evidences, primarily genetic research. They categorically reject AIT and assert a far more 'ancient demographic history of India'. According to the research in gene pool variation conducted by Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology, Hyderabad, the Indian populations are descendents of the very first modern humans, who ventured the journeyof out ofAfrica about 65,000 years ago.[29]

[28] (The Holy Reich: Nazi Conceptions of Christianity, 1919-1945, p. 117) [29] (Complex genetic origin of Indian populations and its implications, 2012 pp. 911 &915)

This rejection of AIT on basis of latest developments in genetic science is not a solitaryexample.According to theAmerican Journal of Human Genetics:–

Haplotype diversity associated with these South Asian ancestory components is significantly higher than that of the components dominating the West Eurasian ancestry palette. Modeling of the observed haplotype diversities suggests that both Indian ancestory components are older than the purported Indo-Aryan invasion 3,500 YBP[30].

Though this theory has nothing to do with the speculativeAIT or its implications like Aryan-Dravidian conflict, yet, it deserves to be included in the curriculum on the basis of its merit.

In light of the mass of evidence against AIT, the claim of NCERT books being scientific in their approach appears to be dishonest.

[30] (Shared and Unique Components of Human Population Structure and Genome-Wide Signals of Positive Selection in South Asia, 2011 p.731)

CHAPTER 4 Distorting the Legacy

NCERT's malicious reductionism and misrepresentations of the autochthonous values, sacred literature and cultural ethos destroy the essence of Indic civilization. Children are presented a caricature of their ancient culture and value system.

All the virtues of the Indic civilization are transplanted as invaders' attributes. Not only has the viciousness and exploitative nature of foreign rulers been sanitized, it is presented as innate depravity of the Indic culture.

A

fter surreptitiouslydelinking Vedas and present civilizationfrom the Sarasvati civilization on the basis of a colonial construct, the NCERT books proceed to denigrate Vedas and ancient India by portraying them tobe fullofslavery, misogyny,feudalism and primitive behavior.

"There are many prayers in the Rigveda for cattle, children (especially sons), and horses. Horses were yoked to chariots that were used in battles, which were fought to capture cattle. Battles were also fought for land, which was important for pasture, and for growing hardy crops that ripened quickly, such as barley. Some battles were fought for water, and to capture people.
Some of the wealth that was obtained was kept bythe leaders, some was given to the priests and the rest was distributed amongst the people. Some wealth was used for the performance of yajnas or sacrifices in which offerings were made into the fire. These were meant for gods and goddesses. Offerings could include ghee, grain, and in some cases, animals. Most men took part in these wars. There was no regular army, but there were assemblies where people met and discussed matters of war and peace. They also chose leaders, who were often brave and skilful warriors."

NCERT, class 6th, p 46 The narrative in subsequent chapters continues on the same lines.

“About 2500 years ago, some janapadas became more important than others, and were known as mahajanapadas…. There were two major changes in agriculture around this time. One was the growing use of iron ploughshares. This meant that heavy, clayey soil could be turned over better than with a wooden ploughshare, so that more grain could be produced. Second, people began transplanting paddy. This meant that instead of scattering seed on the ground, from which plants would sprout, saplings were grown and then planted in the fields. This led to increased production, as many more plants survived. However, it was back breaking work. Generally, slave men and women, (dasas and dasis) and landless agricultural labourers (kammakaras) had to do this work.”

NCERT, class 6th, pp 57 – 60 The gist of these two passages is that the Vedic literature is misogynist, tribal, exploitative and feudal.

Let us examine the points which they are stating
Battles were fought to capture cattle
Battles were fought to grab land and water
Battles were fought to capture people
The captured people were enslaved for life
War booty was distributed among fighters and Brahmans

There are no hymns in the Vedic corpus or any other evidence available to validate NCERT’s contentions. Even NCERT admitted to the same when in a reply to RTI applications it categorically stated that no such record was available with the department.

Secondly, whether society exhibited such behavior can be judged from the historical records also. Historians consider the views expressed by visitors to a country as authentic sources of history because such views are generallyunbiased and lack anynationalistic fervor. Such records become more reliable if the author is not from a rival or enemy country. The period (around 2500 BC) to which the above-mentioned second passage is referring coincides with the stay of Megasthenes, the famous Greek ambassador, in India. The records left by him describe the contemporary

Indian society. Some fragments of the book written by him have survived and can be used to get an idea of the socio-cultural milieu of his times.

His testimony stands in stark contrast to the picture presented by NCERT authors. Regarding slavery he mentions that it is a remarkable fact that *all* Indians are free and not even one of them is a slave. He has compared Indians with Laekedaimonians. Praising the Indian societal rules, he states that although Helots are used as slaves by Laekedaimonians, in India, not even foreigners are enslaved, leave alone their own countrymen[1].

While NCERT books imply that warriors of that time indulged in battles for capturing people and cattle, but literaryhistorical evidence inform of a warrior class that adhered to strict ethics even during war time. Megasthenes has given a vivid description of the code of

[1] (Ancient India as described by Megasthenes and Arrian, pp. 205-8)

ethics practised by the warrior class (Kshatriyas) of that period. The norms of society were not based on exploitation in which some had to do 'back breaking labour' but on division of labour. In his words:

"The second caste consists of Husbandmen, who form the bulk of the population, and are in disposition most mild and gentle. Theyare exempted from militaryservice, and cultivate their lands undisturbed by fear.

The third class consists of herdsmen and hunters, who alone are allowed to hunt, and to keep cattle, and to sell draught animals or let them out on hire. In clearing the land of wild beasts and fowl which devour the seeds sown in the fields, they receive an allowance of grain from the king. They lead a wandering life and live under tents[2]."

"The second caste consists of tillers of the soil, who form most numerous class of the population. They are neither furnished with arms, nor have anymilitaryduties to perform, but they cultivate soil and pay tribute to the kings and independent cities. In times of civil war the soldiers are not allowed to molest the husbandman nor ravage their lands: hence while the former are fighting and killing each other as they can, the latter may be seen

close at hand tranquilly pursuing their work - perhaps ploughing, or gathering in their crops, pruning the trees, or reaping the harvest[3]. The fifth caste among the Indians consists of warriors, who are second in point of number to the herdsmen, but lead a supreme life of freedom and enjoyment. They have only military duties to perform. Others make their arms, and others supply them

[2] (Megasthenes, 1877, p. 84) [3] (ibid, 1877, p. 210)

their horses, and they have others to attend to them in the camp.[4]"

The above facts make it amplyclear that, according to contemporary records, the society of ancient India had a fully developed social structure in which the roles were well defined. Molestation of civilians by warriors was considered a shameful act as it did not subscribe to their ethical code.

The moral code of ethics practised by the warrior class called Kshatriyas, thousands of years ago, has no parallel even todaywhen the UN is trying to enforce such codes. Geneva Convention is also of recent origin.

Omitting the Abrahamic slavery

Although the NCERT authors falsely associate ancient India with slavery and exploitation, they are totally silent on the excesses perpetrated by Turkic and Arab invaders on the indigenous population. The recorded events indicate that large-scale slavery, misogyny and exploitation were part of the Medieval India in areas under the hegemony of these invaders. NCERT authors invert the historical facts, project the qualities of their creed on the Vedic culture.

Reading NCERT books, children are forced to believe that Sultans were almost-ideal kings, bereft of anykind of bigotry or exploitative nature, which NCERT authors have associated with Indic kings. Tounderstand their true character, one has to lookat their biographies or chronicles written by their own courtiers. The picture that emerges from authentic historical accounts written bycontemporary chroniclers is that all the foreign rulers during the period dubbed as 'Sultanate' were waging unrelenting Jihad on the local population.

[4] (ibid p. 211)

Perfidy has been used to show Sultans as egalitarian rulers. The cruelty with which innocent people were forced to become slaves has been eulogised as some kind of favour being extended to the slaves.

"The Khaljis and Tughluqs continued to use bandagan and also raised people of humble birth…The patronage of these humble people by Delhi Sultans also shocked many elites and the authors ofPersiantawarikh criticized the Delhi Sultans for appointing the 'low and base born' to high offices."

NCERT, class 7th, p 38

Let us look at the reasons and conditions in which the Sultans raised 'low born'individuals to high posts.All Sultans had harems in which kidnapped women were kept for pleasure. Security of a harem could not be entrusted to men for obvious reasons. These depraved rulers had the best solution. Whenever possible, pre-pubescent boys were kidnapped as prisoners of war and castrated. These eunuchs were employed as security guards and servants in the harem. Since the harem had hundreds of women and king used to live there, thousands of eunuchs were required. The eagerness with which Sultans sought slaves is best explained by Shamsi Siraj Afif, a chronicler and companion of Firoz Shah Tughlaq in his work titled 'Tarikh-e-Firoz Shahi'.

"The Sultanwas verydiligent in obtaining slaves, and towards that end he issued a *farman* to his *amils* and *jagirdars* to capture slaves whenever they were at war, and to pick out and send the best for the service of the court. When the feudatories went to the court, each one according to his ability took with him beautiful slaves, dressed in clean attire, elegant caps, turbans and socks, in short, ornamented in the most splendid style. Theyalso, whentheypaid annual visits brought, together with other things, slaves for the Sultan… This regulation remained in force for forty years throughout the reign. The chiefs who brought many slaves received the highest favour, and those who brought few received proportionatelylittle consideration.

When the chiefs perceived the Sultan's eagerness for slaves, and that their efforts to get them were highly appreciated, they exerted themselves inproviding them, and the numbers brought everyyear exceed description. "Some of the slaves spent their time inreading and committing tomemorythe holybook, others inreligious studies, and others in copying books. Some were placed under tradesmen and were taught mechanical arts, so that about 12,000 slaves became artisans (*kasib*) of various kinds. Altogether, in the city and in the various fiefs there were 180,000 slaves. In fact there was no occupation in which the slaves of Firoz Shah were not employed. When the slaves became too numerous, some of them were given into the charge ofAmirs and Maliks.[5]"

These unfortunate children, snatched away from the bosoms of their mothers at a tender age, were castrated and forced to work for the Sultans in different capacities. But the picture presented by NCERT books is that the Sultans were endowed with a benevolent nature and an egalitarian outlook due to which they raised the 'low and baseborn' to high offices.
We have seen the treatment meted out to young boys kidnapped from the kingdom to work as slaves. A more sinister fate awaited the captive women. The NCERT authors have completely omitted this dark chapter from history of our country. Sultans, as per their religious beliefs, kept non-Muslim women as concubines and sold them as chattle. It resulted in debauchery and rape of millions of

[5] (Tarikhe Firoz Shahi, pp. 340-341)
women. How this grisly tradition was practised is recorded by

Moroccan traveller Ibn Batuta.
"On the celebration of Eid…first of all, the daughters of Kafir (Hindu) kings, who have been captured during that year during raids are produced, who sing and dance for the audience. Thereafter, they are gifted to the chief foreigners and Amirs. After this the daughters of other Kafirs come and dance. When they are through with their singing and dancing, the Sultan gifts them to his brothers, relatives, sons of Maliks etc. The Sultan conducts this darbar after the namaz. Next day the darbar commences in the same

manner. Captured girls are brought for singing. After their singing and dancing, the Sultan presents them to his chief slaves….[6]"

This kind of cruel treatment towards helpless women, children and defeated enemy soldiers was alien to Indian traditions of warfare.

But, in stark contrast, the Sultans, and later on Mughals, were following the original Islamic traditions as developed since seventh centuryArabia. For example, the book 19 of Sahih Muslim on the topic of Jihad and Expedition describes a Hadith regarding treatment of prisoners of war.

"It has been narrated on the authority of Salama bin Akwa, who said: We fought against Fazara and Abu Bakr was our commander. He had been appointed by the messenger of Allah. When we were only at an hour's distance from water of the enemy, Abu Bakr ordered us to attack. We made a halt during the last part of the night to rest then we attacked from all sides and reached their watering place where a battle was fought. Some of the enemies were killed and some were

[6] (Tughlaq Kalin Bharat, p. 289)

taken prisoners. I saw a group of persons that consisted of women and children. I was afraid lest they should reach the mountain before me so I shot an arrow between them and the mountain. When they saw the arrow, they stopped. So, I brought them driving them along.Among them was a woman from Banu Fazara. She was wearing a leather coat. I drove them along until I brought them toAbu Bakr who bestowed that girl upon me as a prize. So we arrived in Medina. I had not yet disrobed her when the messenger ofAllah (peace be upon him) met me in the street and said: give me that girl, O Salama. I said: messenger ofAllah, she has fascinated me. I had not yet disrobed her when on the next day, the messenger ofAllah again met me in the street. He said: O Salama, give me that girl, may God bless your father. I said – She is for you, messenger of Allah! ByAllah, I have not yet disrobed her. The messenger ofAllah sent her to the people of Mecca and surrendered her as ransom for a number of Muslims who had been kept prisoners at Mecca[7]."

After the death of Muhammad, the second caliph Umar ordered that noArab should be enslaved as all of them had become Muslims. The IslamisedArabs, who used to take pride in the number of slaves and concubines they possessed, started procuring slaves from neighbouring countries. Rome was the ancient centre for human slave trade, but now Mecca became the chief centre. As Islam started spreading, major cities under the Islamic rule became flourishing markets for human slaves. Medina, Kufa, Baghdad, Damascus, Bukhara, Ghazni and later on Delhi became centres that thrived on the sale of unfortunate Kafirs caught in the snares of Muslim armies. The religious sanction as enshrined in Quran gave legitimacyto this trade that flourished on human misery. Slaves

[7] (Muslim, HADITH No. 4345)

were considered war booty, which was providence from Allah due to the Jihad that the Mujahids were waging on non-Muslims[8]. The Arabic word for war booty is Ghanimat[9]. The women of nonMuslims could be treated as the property of Muslims[10], thus the hapless women captured during a raid or a fight could be debauched or sold, according to the wishes of the Muslim owner.

Slavery has existed throughout the world from ancient times. We find its existence in Greece, Egypt, Romanempire and Mesopotamia. In all these ancient societies, slaves were treated with varying degrees of harshness or kindness. We will not go into the details of this aspect as our aim is to discuss the topic only in reference to the NCERT books. These books present the topic as:

“Slaverywas an institution deeplyrooted in the ancient world, both in the Mediterranean and in the Near East, and *not even* Christianity when it emerged and triumphed as the state religion (in the fourth century) seriously challenged this institution. It does not follow that the bulk of the labour in the Roman economy was performed by slaves.”

NCERT, class 11th, p 68

The phrase ‘seriously challenged’ used by NCERT authors can have two meanings: either Christianity did challenge the institution of slavery, but it was not serious in its attempts, or, it did challenge, but could not produce the desired results. Both these implications assume that Christianitychallenged slavery. It is contraryto historical facts. If the aim of the NCERT authors is to present Christianity as an ideology that was against slavery, the historical deeds of Popes, Bishops and entire clergy will prove that the NCERT authors are incorrect. When English writer Chapman Cohen decided to find

[8] (Qur’an, 8:69)
[9] (Qur’an 48:15)
[10] (Qur’an 4:24)

out the relationship between Christianityand slavery, he wrote about his objective:

“It is to examine the relation historical and doctrinal — which has existed between Christianity and the slave trade.And an impartial examination of the facts will show, not alone that slavery is countenanced by the Christian scriptures, but that as an institution it flourished under Christian rule, was never formallyprohibited bythe Christianchurch, was revived under Christian auspices when various social causes threatened its disappearance, and in modern times added a measure of degradation to the lot of the slave that was unknown to antiquity[11].”

Chapman tells us a remarkable feature of the pre-ChristianityRome and its religion:

“Roman religion was polytheistic, inclusive, and tolerant. Christianitywas monotheistic, exclusive, and intolerant. And as the latter extended its sway over the world of politics it introduced the spirit of exclu-siveness and intolerance into all departments of life[12].”

He also states that the Christian theologians used the Biblical narrative of Ham, the cursed son of Noah, as an excuse to enslave blacks. They elaborated the myth and associated it with skin color. They expounded that the whole race having a dark skin could be enslaved as a command from the Biblical God. Thus, slavery was accorded a sanction granted by God[13]. In all the civilizations antedating Christianity, nobody ever tried to justify slavery on religious, moral or ethical grounds. It was a gift of Church[14].

[11] (Christian Slavery and Labour, p. 14)
[12] (ibid p. 14)
[13] (ibid p. 15)
[14] (ibid p. 16)

Regarding the treatment meted out to slaves by Christians, it is stated to be the most frightful and systematic brutalitythat the world has ever known[15].

In contrast, and contraryto NCERT assertions, in the ancient Indian society, even servants were treated with consideration. Their condition was far better as compared to that of the slaves in ancient Egypt, Greece and Rome. Gautam Buddh enjoined his layfollowers to assign only as much work to their servants as they could easily do. He also said that the master should attend to the needs of his servants when the latter was ill. During the Maurya period (C. 300 BC to 100 BC), Kautilya laid down rules on how servants should be treated by their masters. The master was not to punish a servant without reason. If a master ill-treated his servants, the State was to punish him. Emperor Ashoka says in his Rock Edict IX that all people should treat their servants with sympathy and consideration.

Unlike Buddh, Jesus Christ did not find anything objectionable to slavery[16]. Same goes for the apostles of Christianity. Yet, NCERT historians, by choice of their words, are force feeding our children something that does not stand the test of an objective scrutiny.

Equating caste with slavery

The NCERT authors paint a picture in which Islam and Christianity are projected as egalitarian and free from evils like slavery. At the same time,

they spoon-feed the notion that Vedic society was mired in this detestable social evil. In fact, they go a step further. They conflate the caste 'oppression'with slavery.

"In 1873, Phule wrote a book named Gulamgiri, meaning slavery. Some ten years before this, theAmerican Civil War had been fought, leading to the end of slavery in America.

[15] (ibid p. 19)
[16] (Muslim Slave System in Medieval India p.32)

Phule dedicated his book to all those Americans who had fought to free slaves, *thus establishing a link* between the conditions of the "lower" castes in India and the black slaves inAmerica."

NCERT, class 8th, p 117 Notice the phrase 'thus establishing a link'. A conclusion is established without providing a single evidence or proof.

When Europeans reached the Americas, they started decimating the indigenous population to create vast tracts of land for plantations. The plantations needed cheap labour, which was procured from Africa in the form of slaves. This created a triangle of Europe, America and Africa in which blacks were captured and sold into slavery, to be shipped as indentured labours for the plantations in America. The trade was lucrative and led to prosperity of many Europeans and Americans.

By the nineteenth century, a campaign against slavery and inhuman treatment to slaves started raging inAmerica. Those who wanted slaverytobe abolished were called abolitionists. This was detrimental to a large number of individuals who had made a fortune out of the misery of innocentAfricans. Apart from these individuals, Church as an institution was the biggest slave holder. To fight abolitionists, every kind of imaginable excuse was put forward for continuation of slavery. One of the most effective excuses was that slavery was ordained bythe Biblical God. Accordingly,Africans were portrayed as the descendants of Ham, the son of

Noah, who had mocked at the nudity of his father. The Biblical mythology was used as a justification of slavery.

"The words, cursed Ham, therefore, signify, in the Hebrew, that he had been always a bad person, even from childhood; for let it not be forgotten that Ham, at the very time he did that act, was more than a hundred years old.All the powers of his mind were as matured then as they ever could be; the deed, therefore, was but a trait of the gigantic negro's general life and character…But says one, we have always held that this curse of Noah, as it is called, upon the negro race, was a kind of unmeaning rhapsody of the father of Ham, and long ago became obsolete and perfectlynugatory. To unhinge, therefore, a notion so fraught with lightness and falsehood, we exhibit the following, from the pen of inspiration, and having a strong relation in kind and character, so far as relates to the curse of God, or denunciations of the Highest, which he has seen fit to publish in the annals of truth—the Holy Scriptures, we bring them to view as parallels to the case of the denunciation of Ham, believing as fully in their perfect accomplishment as we do in that of the curse of Noah upon Ham and his race[17]…. The great and everywhere pervading fact of their degraded condition, both now and in all time, more or less, is the very climaxwitness that, in the above conclusion, we are not mistaken— namely, that the negro race, as a people, are judicially given over to a state or peculiar liability of being enslaved by the other races. Why the Supreme Being saw fit to create or to produce such a race thus low in the scale of human existence, and at the same time foreseeing their character and consequent condition on the earth, is more than can be known by human research, and, of necessity, is therefore none of our business[18]."

Thus the sub-human treatment was presented as a Biblical order. Such interpretations were not without any basis. Bible as a book

[17] (Bible Defence of Slavery, p. 53) [18] (ibid, p. 99)

also supports the institution of slavery. This is true for both the components of the Christian Bible: New as well Old Testament. "However, you may purchase male or female slaves from
among the foreigners who live among you. You may also

purchase the children of such resident foreigners, including those who have been born in your land. You may treat them as your property, passing them on to your children as a permanent inheritance. You may treat your slaves like this, but the people of Israel, your relatives, must never be treated this way[19].
When a man sells his daughter as a slave, she will not be freed at the end of six years as the men are. If she does not please the manwho bought her, he mayallow her to be bought back again. But he is not allowed to sell her to foreigners, since he is the one who broke the contract with her. And if the slave girl's owner arranges for her to marry his son, he may no longer treat her as a slave girl, but he must treat her as his daughter. If he himself marries her and then takes another wife, he may not reduce her food or clothing or fail to sleep with her as his wife. If he fails in any of these three ways, she may leave as a free woman without making any payment[20].
When a man strikes his male or female slave with a rod so hard that the slave dies under his hand, he shall be punished. If, however, the slave survives for a day or two, he is not to be punished, since the slave is his own property[21].
The servant will be severely punished, for though he knew his duty, he refused to do it. "But people who are not aware

[19] (Bible, Leviticus 25:44-46)
[20] (Bible Exodus 21:7-11)
[21] (Bible Exodus 21:20-21)

that theyare doing wrong will be punished onlylightly. Much is required from those to whom much is given, and much more is required from those to whom much more is given[22]"

Although NCERT authors malign Indic scriptures by innuendos and misquotes, nowhere have theybeenable tomuster intellectualcourage or honesty to present Abrahamic scriptures as a source of slavery or other

social evils. Ironically, they present a very benign and benevolent picture of these creeds. Not even a single traveller, Megasthenes in 300 BC, Hieun Tsang in the seventh century, AlBeruni in eleventh century, Marco Polo in thirteenth century, Ibn Batuta in fourteenth century, Bernier in seventeenth century, mentions class conflicts or oppression of 'lower castes'. It is only with the advent of Britishers that this caste-conflict theory gets a life. Even during the British era, there were voices giving a description that was closer to truth. Monier Williams was an orientalist and had keen interest in Indian civilization. He had spent considerable time in colonial India.

"With regard to the impure castes already alluded to as constituting one element of all village communes, it should be noted that although regarded by the Brahmans as impure, their usefulness is not the less recognised. Their services are, in fact, felt to be indispensable, and the treatment they receive accords with the urgency rather than with the character of their duties. *No greater mistake could be made than to suppose that the condition of the low-caste people of India is one either of serfdom or slavery*. Neither the Dher nor the Bhangi are outcastes.Albeit their occupation is of a mean kind they take a pride in doing it well and patiently. They are consequently not only well treated by others but

[22] (Bible Luke 12:47-48)

they themselves have the same feelings of self-respect and caste-respect as the other classes of society. Nay, they are often stricter in the observance of their caste rules than men of the higher classes[23]."

These are the words of a colonial administrator who was an eyewitness to slavery, as well as, caste system. He is warning in unambiguous terms that the two systems are not comparable yet, that is exactly what NCERT is doing.

Enslavers as emancipators

Since the NCERT history books do not stick to a chronological order of events, it has helped them to erase those periods from history which do not

suit their biases and over emphasise the ones which suit their ideology, or that of their political masters. It is also helpful in keeping the student sufficiently disoriented to make one receptive to all that is being peddled in the name of history. In the textbooks of class 12th, Mahmud Ghaznavi is being portrayed as a benevolent character.

"When the Punjab became a part of the Ghaznavid Empire, contacts with the local population helped create an environment of mutual trust and understanding."

NCERT, class 12th, p 116

A student who has been learning for the past six years that the Indic society was suffering from the 'obnoxious' system created by Brahmans is now taught that, at last, someone has come as a saviour. Mahmud Gaznavi was able to create 'mutual trust' and 'understanding' among different sections of society. It is better to read the historical records to understand the 'contacts with the local population' byGhaznavid empire.

[23] (Modern India and the Indians, p. 49)

"Large numbers of the natives of the country, guilty of no crime but that of following the religion of their fathers, were carried off to Ghazni as slaves, and the remarks of one historian probably reflect contemporary Muslim opinion on this practice: 'Slaves were so plentiful that they became very cheap and men of respectability in their native land were degraded to the position of slaves of common shopkeepers. But this is the goodness of Allah, who bestows honour on His own religion and degrades infidelity[24]."

When Mahmud attacked Thanesar, the 'mutual trust' of NCERT authors was visible in the behavior of Mahmud and his army: "In the year 402 (A.H.) Mahmud resolved on the conquest
of Thanesar, in the kingdom of Hindustan. It had reached
the ears of the king that Thanesar was held in the same
veneration by idolaters, as Mecca by the faithful; that there
was an old temple there, in which they had set up a number

of idols, the principal of which was called Jagsom, and was believed to have existed ever since the creation of the world… Mahmud having reached Thanesar before the Hindus had time to assemble for its defence, the city was plundered, the idols broken, and the idol Jagsom was sent to Ghaznin, to be trodden under foot in the street, and decapitated… On this occasion, the Muhammadanarmybrought toGhaznin200,000 captives, so that the capital appeared like an Indian city, for every soldier of the armyhad several slaves and slave girls[25]."

When a relative of Mahmud raided Hindustan, his large army was surrounded from all sides and killed by Indians. When Masud, nephew of Mahmud, reached Bahraich (about 1033 CE),

[24] (Cambridge History of India, volume 3, p. 17,) [25] (Farishtah, p. 452-454)

"Hindu unbelievers assembled from all quarters with one accord, and gathered together an army in numbers like a swarm of ants or locusts, to attack Bahraich…The army of the enemy was innumerable, like mountains on every side; so that although numerous forces fought in the army of Islam, they were mown down like so much grass. Many of the greatest nobles met their deaths. In the course of that day, from morning till evening prayer, two-thirds of the army were slain, leaving but one-third to mourn their loss[26]."

Hiding concubinage, highlighting sati

The visitors to ancient India did not notice slavery, which indicates absence of this practice. The Indic scriptures do not condone slavery. On the other hand, the scriptures of Abrahamic religions explicitly command their adherents to enslave persons belonging to other religions.

"Now therefore kill everymale among the little ones, and kill every woman that hath known man by lying with him. But all the women children, that have not known a man by lying with him, keep alive for yourselves.And the booty, being the rest of the prey which the men of war had caught, was six hundred thousand and seventy thousand and five thousand sheep. And thirty

and two thousand persons in all, of women that had not known man by lying with him." 40. And the persons were sixteen thousand; of which the Lord's tribute was thirty and two persons.[27]"

According to the biographers of prophet Muhammad, he kept at least two non-Muslim women, the Jewess Rihana[28] and the Copt

[26] (Mirati Masudi, p. 544)
[27] (Bible, Numbers, Chapter 31, Verses 17,18,32,35,40)
[28] (The Life of Mahomet, p. 309)

Maria[29], as slaves. Since he is considered to be the role model for all Muslims, all the Sultans and Mughals subscribed to this practice.

TheArabic phrase *Ma malkat aimanukum* which implies 'captured women' has been translated as 'your right hand possess' by the Islamic scholars during translation of Qur'an. The following verses will make it clear that these women can be used as sex slaves.

"And those who preserve their chastity... Save with their wives and those whom their right hands possess, for thus they are not blameworthy[30]"
"And who guard their modesty - Save from their wives or the (slaves) that their right hands possess, for then they are not blameworthy[31]"
"And tell the believing women to lower their gaze and be modest, and to display of their adornment only that which is apparent, and to draw their veils over their bosoms, and not to reveal their adornment save to their own husbands or fathers or husbands' fathers, or their sons or their husbands' sons, or their brothers or their brothers' sons or sisters' sons, or their women, or their slaves, or male attendants who lack vigour, or children who know naught of women's nakedness. And let them not stamp their feet so as to reveal what they hide of their adornment. And turn unto Allah together, O believers, in order that ye may succeed.

And marry such of you as are solitary and the pious of your slaves and maid-servants. If they be poor, Allah will enrich them of His bounty. Allah is of ample means, Aware.

[28] (The Life of Mahomet, p. 309) [29] (ibid, p. 411)

And let those who cannot find a match keep chaste tillAllah give them independence by His grace. And such of your slaves as seek a writing (of emancipation), write it for them if ye are aware of aught of good in them, and bestow upon them of the wealth of Allah which He hath bestowed upon you. Force not your slave-girls to whoredom that ye may seek enjoyment of the life of the world, if they would preserve their chastity. And if one force them, then (unto them), after their compulsion, lo!Allah will be Forgiving, Merciful[32]."

Whenever and wherever possible, during Muslim rule (with a few exceptions), women in India were frequently captured and sold to be debauched in slave markets that were flourishing in the Islamic world. Yet none of this finds its way into the NCERT history books. They are erased from the collective memory of the nation.

"WOMEN SLAVES, SATI AND LABOURERS – Travellers who left written accounts were generally men who were interested in and sometimes intrigued by the condition of women in the subcontinent…. Some female slaves in the service of the Sultan were experts in music and dance, and Ibn Battuta enjoyed their performance at the wedding of the Sultan's sister. Female slaves were also employed by the Sultan to keep a watch on his nobles. Slaves were generally used for domestic labour" NCERT, class 12th, p 135

Not a single word about large-scale rapine and pillage; not a word on concubinage; not a word on kidnap of women after killing their menfolk. The title of the section is carefully chosen to insert sati. A special box has been used to depict a case of sati as recorded by Bernier in which Brahmans are shown to be carrying a young girl to her funeral pyre.

[31] (Qur'an 23:5-6)

"At Lahore I saw a most beautiful young widow sacrificed, who could not, I think, have been more than twelve years of age. The poor little creature appeared more dead than alive when she approached the dreadful pit: the

agony of her mind cannot be described: she trembled and wept bitterly: but three or four of the Brahmanas, assisted by an old woman who held her under the arm, forced the unwilling victim toward the fatal spot, seated her on the wood, tied her hands and feet, lest she should runaway, and in that situation the innocent creature was burnt alive. I found it difficult to repress my feelings and to prevent their bursting forth into clamorous and unavailing rage." NCERT, class 12th, p 135

Notice the graphic narration and the words chosen. Bernier had mentioned many cases of Sati in his book, which were voluntary on the part of the widow involved. This passage seems to be chosen for its value as 'atrocity literature'. A young child being forcibly burnt alive by Brahmans!

The authors of the present book do not condone Sati or persons who used to abet it. Our issue is the utter lack of sense of proportion on the part of such portrayal.

What is the aim of NCERT in presenting the alien creeds as benevolent, egalitarian and liberal at the cost of their own heritage? What is the message that the NCERT authors are trying to seed in the impressionable young minds? Will the children after reading such malicious content feel proud of their culture and heritage? Do the NCERT authors want the children to despise their ancestors? Is this a subtle design to make children soft targets for proselytization?

CHAPTER 5 The Wicked Indian Kings and the Emancipating Invaders

After undermining the geographical unity, the language, the antiquity and the scriptures, the NCERT authors system-atically run down Indic rulers. Not one indigenous king, despite the vastness of India and her antiquity, is shown in positive light, instead they are lampooned as rapacious small-time chiefs and tyrants.

In the grand narrative of NCERT, the only paragons of justice and pluralism belong to alien creeds. Medieval bigots from Ghaznawi to Tipu

are all sanitised as progressive and just administrators.

I

t is an irony that while the Indian Constitution and the national polity are governed by secularism, for the NCERT history textbooks, the defining criterion for 'good' and 'bad' is religion. The message to the schoolchildren, though not directly but implied by the choice of narrative inthe NCERT books, is that the Indic religions always stand for something bad, like misogyny or discrimination, while everything associated with the Abrahamic religions denotes 'good', like justice and benevolence.

Astriking case in point is the treatment ofthe Indic kings, particularly, those following the Sanatan Dharm in contrast to Islamic Turkic and Mughal rulers and their regimes.
In all, there are ten books of history from class sixth to twelfth. In these, there is not a single Indic king whose policies, behavior, character, courage or nature is presented in positive light. Rather, all of them are presented as small-time chiefs and adjectives are used to caricature them. They are either shown to be pompous or ruthless. This is valid for all Indic kings starting from the times before Megasthenes right up to the great Maratha Shivaji. Considering the vastness of India's geographical area before partition and long durationofIndiancivilization, it is surprising that the NCERT experts could not find even one ruler who was worthy of a positive portrayal.

Directly opposite to this depiction of Indic kings, each and every Muslim ruler, from Ghaznavi to Aurangzeb, is presented as an epitome of justice. Even their ancestors, as ruthless as Timurlame, are presented as 'great'. Out of these, onlyAkbar and Aurangzeb can be said to have ruled a large geographical region, whereas remaining invaders could gain a foothold only for very small time period and that too in small pockets of the country. But, the space and ink spent in NCERT books to glorify these invaders creates an impression as if they prevailed for most of the historical time period throughout India.

“The Mughals were descendants of two *great* lineages of rulers. From their mother’s side they were descendents of Genghis Khan (died 1227), ruler of Mongol tribes, China and Asia. From their father’s side they were successors of Timur (died 1404) the ruler of Iran, Iraq and modern day Turkey…Theywere proud of their Timurid ancestry, not least of all because their *great* ancestor had captured Delhi in 1398.”

NCERT, class 7th, p 47 The word ‘great’is used for Timurlame, also calledr Sewj ya. He got this name due to a pronounced limp in his gait as a result of an injury he had sustained during childhood. This ‘great’ ancestor was stealing sheep from a farm and the owner woke up and shot an arrow, which hit his pelvic area, hence the limp[1]. When he grew up, he became well versed in Islamic doctrines. His attack on Hindustan was a result of his Jihadi zeal. Teaching Timurlame as a ‘great’ man in India is akin to teaching Jews thatAdolf Hitler was a ‘great’ personality. Timurlame used to proclaim, “plunder in war is as lawful as their mothers’ milk to Musalmans who war for their faith”[2]. When he invaded India, he butchered lakhs of Indians, including 1,00,000 Hindus in one night alone. In his own words:

“At this Court Amir Jahan Shah and Amir Sulaiman Shah, and other amirs of experience, brought to my notice that, from the time of entering Hindustan up to the present time, we had taken more than 100,000 infidels Hindus prisoners, and that they were all in my camp. On the previous day, when the enemy’s forces made the attack upon us, the prisoners, made signs ofrejoicing, uttered imprecations against us, and were ready, as soon as they heard of the enemy’s success, to form themselves into a body, break their bonds, plunder our tents, and then to go and join the enemy, and so increase his numbers and strength. I asked their advice about the prisoners, and they said that on the great day of battle these 100,000 prisoners could not be left with the baggage, and that it would be entirely opposed to the rules of war to set these idolaters and foes of Islam at liberty. In fact, no other course remained but that of making them all food for

[1] (Life of Timur p. 2)

[2] (Understanding Muhammad: A Psychobiography of Allah's Prophet p. 26)

the sword. When I heard these words I found them in accordance with the rules of war, and I directly gave my command for the Tawachis to proclaim throughout the camp that every man who had infidel prisoners was to put them to death, and whoever neglected to do so should himself be executed and his property given to the informer. When this order became known to the ghazis of Islam, they drew their swords and put their prisoners todeath. 100,000 infidels, impious idolaters, were on that day slain. Maulana Nasiru-d din Umar, a counsellor and man of learning, who, in all his life, had never killed a sparrow, now, in execution of my order, slew with his sword fifteen idolatrous Hindus, who were his captives. After the whole of the vile idolaters had been sent to hell…[3]"

Unlike NCERT authors, Timurlame was very honest about his reason to attack Hindustan. Timur in his memoirs recorded: "About the year 800 AH (1398 CE) there arose in my heart
the desire to lead an expedition against the infidels and to become a champion of the faith, for it had reached my ears that the slayer of the infidels is a champion and if he is slain, he becomes a martyr. It was for this reason that I formed my resolution but I was undetermined in my mind whether I should direct my expedition against the infidels of China or against the infidels and polytheists of India.

In this matter I sought an omen from the Koran and the verse to which I opened was this: 'O Prophet, make war upon the infidels and unbelievers, and treat them with severity[4]."

[3] (Malfuzti Timuri: History of India as told by Its Own Historians, pp. 435-436)
[4] (ibid, pp. 394-395)

Ironically, our students are being taught by using the tax payers' money that such a person, who committed genocide on the basis of religion in this country, was a 'great'man.

Redefining ruthlessness
To understand the contrasting treatment by NCERT authors, read the way

Hindu kings are portrayed.

“However, earlyBuddhist and Jaina writers who wrote about Magadha attributed its power to the policies of individuals: *ruthlessly ambitious* kings of whom Bimbisara, Ajatasattu and Mahapadma Nanda are the best known, and their ministers, who helped implement their policies.”

NCERT, class 12th, p 31

According to dictionary, the word ‘ruthless’ refers to someone – “Having no sympathy or pity; hard and selfish”. Out of the three kings mentioned by NCERT, onlyAjatasattu can be considered to be ruthless as he imprisoned his father.

On the other hand, a peek into the lives of Sultans and Mughals tells us that most of them killed their near and dear ones in order to gain control of the throne or to retain it. Aurangzeb imprisoned his own aged father to gain control of the kingdom, but he is depicted as a benevolent ruler.

The Moroccan traveller Ibn Batuta, who lived in India for a considerable period of time, in his travelogue, ‘Rihla’ or ‘Rehla’, noted down facts about various Sultans. RegardingAllauddin Khilji, he states that:

“Sultan Jalalu-d din had a son named Ruknu-d din, and a nephew calledAlau-d din, whom he married to his daughter, and to whom he gave the government of the towns of Karra and Manikpur, with the dependent territories…. ‘Alau-d din was a sharp and brave man, who had often been victorious, and the *ambition* of sovereigntytook possession of his mind, but he had no wealth but what he won by the point of his sword by despoiling the infidels. He set out to carry JIHAD (the holy war) into the country of Deogir…

‘Alau-d din returned to Karra, but did not send any portion of the spoil to his uncle. Certain persons stirred up the feelings of his uncle against him, and the Sultan summoned him. He refused to go to Court, and the Sultan then said, “I will go and bring him, for he is to me as a son.”Accordingly he set out with his army, and marched until he reached the bank of the river

opposite to Karra, at the same place where Sultan Mu'izzu-d din had encamped when he went to meet his father, Nasiru-d din. He embarked on the river to go and meet his nephew. The latter also took boat with the intention of making an end of the Sultan, and he said to his companions, "*When I embrace him, kill him*." When the two princes met in the middle of the river, *the nephew embraced his uncle, and his companions despatched the Sultan as he had instructed them*. The *murderer seized upon the kingdom*, and took command of the troops of his victim.

When he had killed his uncle he became master of the kingdom, and the greater part of the troops of Jalalu-d din passed over to his side. The rest returned to Dehli and gathered round Ruknu-d din. The latter marched out to attack the murderer, but all his soldiers deserted to 'Alau-d din, and he fled to Sind[5]."

The description given by the famous chronicler Ziauddin Barani is more vivid:
"Aldu-d din advanced to receive him, he and all his officers showing due respect. When he reached the Sultan he fell at his feet, and the Sultan treating him as a son, kissed his eyes and cheeks, stroked his beard, gave him two loving taps upon the cheek, and said "I have brought thee up from infancy, why art thou afraid of me?"
The Sultan took 'Allaudin's hand, and at that moment the stony-hearted traitor gave the fatal signal. Muhammad Salim, of Samina, a bad fellow of a bad family, struck at the Sultan with a sword, but the blow fell short and cut his own hand. He again struck and wounded the Sultan, who ran towards the river, crying, "Ah thou villain, 'Allauddin!What hast thou done? Ikhtiyaru-d din Hud ran after the betrayed monarch, threw him down, and cut off his head, and bore it dripping with blood to 'Alau-d din.
Some of those persons who accompanied the Sultan had landed, and others remained in the boats, but all were slain. Villainyand treachery, and murderous feelings, covetousness and desire of riches, thus did their work. The murder was perpetrated on the 17th Ramazan, and the venerable head of the Sultan was placed on a spear and paraded about. When the rebels returned to Karra-Manikpur it was also paraded there, and was afterwards sent to be exhibited in Oudh.

While the head of the murdered sovereign was yet dripping withblood, the ferocious conspirators brought the royalcanopy and elevated it over the head of 'Alau-ddin[6]."

Allauddin Khilji killed his own uncle, Jalaluddin, who was not only his father-in-law, but had also raised him. Allauddin owed his [6] (TarikheFiroz Shahi, pp. 154-155)

administrative power to his uncle and still he killed him. But, the NCERT experts did not find his deeds compatible with someone who can be labelled 'Ruthlessly ambitious'. Rather he has been praised as a good administrator.

The ruthlessness ofAllauddin can also be understood from the fact that he also killed his brother-in-law and imprisoned his own son, on mere suspicion of a conspiracy to dethrone him. According to Ibn Batuta:

"Alau-d din had several sons, whose names were—1. Khizr Khan, 2. Shadi Khan, 3. Abu Bakr Khan, 4. Mubarak Khan, also called Kutbu-d din, who became king, 5. Shahabu-d din. Kutbu-d din was treated unkindly by his father, and received very little notice. The Sultan bestowed honours on all his brothers—that is, he granted them banners and drums; but on him he conferred nothing. But one day the Sultan said to him, "I reallymust give you what I have given your brothers." Kutbu-d din replied, "It is God who will give it me." This answer alarmed his father, who became afraid of him. The Sultan was then attacked by the malady of which he died.

But when Khizr Khan heard that his father had killed his maternal uncle, he was greatlyconcerned, and tore the collar of his garment, as the Indians are in the habit of doing when any one dies who is dear to them. His father, on hearing this, was much annoyed, and when Khizr Khan appeared before him, he reprimanded and censured him. *Then he ordered irons to be put upon his hands and feet*, and gave him into the charge of Malik Naib above mentioned, with orders to convey him to the fortress of Gwalior[7]."
Apart fromAllauddin Khilji, another Sultan prominently mentioned in NCERT history books is Muhammad Shah Tughlaq. In ruthlessness and ambition, he was one step ahead of Khilji. He killed his father to take

control of the throne of Delhi. Ibn Batuta, mentions the incident of patricide in his records:

"When he came near to his capital, on his return from the expedition, he ordered his son to build for him a palace, or, as these people call it, a kushk, near a river, which runs by a place called Afghanpur. Muhammad built it in the course of three days, making it chiefly of wood. It was elevated above the ground, and rested on pillars ofwood. Muhammad planned it scientifically, and Malik Zada was charged to see the plans carried out. This man was afterwards known by the title of Khwaja-I Jahan. His real name was Ahmad, son of Ayas. He was then inspector of buildings, but he afterwards became chief wazir of Sultan Muhammad. The object which these two persons kept in view in building the kushk was this— that it should fall down with a crash when the elephants touched it in a certain part. The Sultan stopped at this building and feasted the people, who afterwards dispersed. His son asked permission to parade the elephants before him, fully accoutered. The Sultan consented. Shaikh Ruknu-d din told me that he was then near the Sultan, and that the Sultan's favourite son, Mahmud, was with them. Thereupon Muhammad came and said to the shaikh, "Master, it is now the time for afternoon prayer, go down and pray." I went down, said the shaikh, and they brought the elephants up on one side, as the prince and his confidant had arranged. When the animals passed along that side, the building fell down upon the Sultan and his son Mahmud. I heard the noise, continued the shaikh, and I returned without having said my prayer. I saw that the building had fallen.
The Sultan's son, Muhammad, ordered pickaxes and shovels to be brought to dig and seek for his father, but he made signs for them not to hurry, and the tools were not brought till after sunset. Then they began to dig, and they found the Sultan, who had bent over his son to save him from death. Some assert that Tughlik was taken out dead; others, on the contrary, maintain that he was alive, and that an end was made of him. He was carried away at night to the tomb which he had himself built near the city called after him Tughlikabad, and there he was interred.

It was to the skilful management of the wazir, Khwaja-I Jahan, in constructing the edifice which fell upon Tughlik, that he owed the position

he held with Sultan Muhammad, and the partialitywhichthe latter had for him. No one, whether wazir or otherwise, enjoyed anything like the consideration in which he was held by the Sultan, and never attained the high position which he possessed near him[8]."

Similarly, Mughals who are portrayed as benevolent and justice loving kings were no less ruthless and ambitious. Shah Jahan is projected as an epitome of justice and peace. His time's historical records, though, tell a story of massacres and rapine, which he unleashed on the people of the country. The incident reproduced here relates to the efforts of this Mughal to capture Shahji Bhonsle, the father of Chhtrapati Shivaji. Sir Jadunath Sirkar records that due to the swiftness and agilityof his cavalry, Shahji not only eluded the Mughal armies, but also created a lot of trouble for them. It dawned on Shah Jahan that the Maratha could not be subdued as long as Bijapur and Golkonda weren't under the control of Mughals. When Shah Jahan resolved to undertake this mission, he made elaborate preparations. In early 1635, Mughals chased Shahji for a

[8] (ibid pp. 610-611)

long time, but were unable to capture the elusive Maratha. This failure made Shah Jahan restless and the next year, he personally reached Daulatabad to supervise the operations.

A strong army of 50,000 men was split into three groups who prepared to attack Bijapur and Golkonda if they did not submit to the Mughals. Another band of 8,000 men was sent under Shaista Khan to capture the Nizam Shahi forts in the north-west and to take possession of Junnar and Nasik districts.

Abdullah, the king of Golkonda, was overwhelmed by the preparations of Mughal army and submitted without putting up a fight. ByApril 1636, he caused the Mughals to proclaim Shah Jahan to be sovereign and accepted a tributary status.

The king of Bijapur was not submissive and defied the Mughal advance. The three Mughal armies entered his kingdom from three sides: Bidar,

Sholapur and Indapur.

“With a ruthlessness surpassing that of the French who desolated the Palatinate, the Mughal invaders everywhere destroyed all traces of cultivation, burnt down the houses, drove off the cattle, butchered the villagers, or dragged them away to be sold as slaves. With a refinement of cruelty they forced their prisoners to carry their own property for the benefit of the captors! Flourishing villages were ruined forever, and the population thinned[9].”

The intrigues and murders through whichAurangzeb gained control of the throne is another lesson in ruthlessness and naked ambition. “On 6th September, Shah Jahan was taken severely ill at Delhi. For some time his life was despaired of. Dara attended him day and night with extreme filial piety, but he

[9] (History of Auragzeb, volume 1, pp. 36-37)

Excerpt from Ahkam i Alamgiri

also took steps to secure his own succession. He stopped the couriers on the roads and prevented his brothers from getting true news of Court affairs. But this only aggravated

the evil: the wildest rumours prevailed all over the country; the Emperor was believed to be already dead; the officers in the provinces were distracted bythe prospect of an empty throne; lawless men in all parts raised their heads without fear of punishment. Two of the princes, Murad and Shuja, openly crowned themselves in their governments, Gujrat and Bengal respectively. Aurangzib after a short period of gnawing anxietyand depressing uncertainty, decided to play a subtler game. He denounced Dara as an apostate from Islam, proclaimed his own design to be merely to free the old Emperor from Dara¹s domination and to purge the State from non Islamic influences, and lastly he made an alliance with Murad Bakhsh swearing on the Quran to give him all the Mughal territory from the Panjab westwards.

Meanwhile Dara had despatched two armies, one under his son Sulaiman Shukoh and Mirza Rajah Jai Singh against Shuja who was advancing from Bengal, and the other under Maharajah Jaswant Singh and Qasim Khan against Aurangzib and Murad. The first armysurprised and routed Shuja at Bahadurpur, opposite Benares, (14 February, 1658), and pursued him to Mungir.

But Aurangzib and Murad effected a junction outside Dipalpur and crushed Jaswant's army after a long and terriblycontested battle at Dharmat, 14 miles south of Ujjain (15thApril). Dara sent off urgent orders recalling his son from Bihar. But his division of his forces had been a fatal mistake: Sulaiman returned from far off Bihar too late to help his father or even to save himself.
Aurangzib had the immense advantage of crushing his enemies piecemeal, while his own armed strength was doubledbytheleague withMurad.From Ujjainthe victorious brothers pushed on to the capital. At Samugarh, 10 miles east of Agra, Dara who had issued from the city with a second army, attacked them on a frightfully hot day (29th May), was signally defeated, and fled from Agra towards Delhi and the Panjab.

Aurangzib now marched onAgra, compelled his old father to surrender the fort bystopping the supplyof drinking water from the Jamuna, and kept Shah Jahan strictly confined in the harem for the remainder of his life. Then, at Mathura he treacherously made Murad prisoner at a banquet (25th June), and advancing to Delhi crowned himself Emperor (21st July, 1658). Dara was chased through the Panjab and Sindh to Tatta, whence he fled to Gujrat over the Rann of Cutch, undergoing terrible hardships on the way. Asecond army which he raised was destroyed near Ajmir (14th March, 1659), and he was hunted byAurangzib¹s generals from place to place, till he reached Dadar, at the Indian mouth of the Bolan Pass, whose chief betrayed him to Aurangzib. The captive Dara was brought to Delhi, paraded withinsult through the bazaar, and murdered bysome slaves ofAurangzib, (30thAugust, 1659), who had got the Mullas to issue a sentence that according to Islamic Law Dara deserved an apostate¹s death. Murad Bakhsh was beheaded in Gwalior prison as a judicial punishment, on the accusation

of a man whose father he had slain in Gujrat, (4thDecember, 1661). Dara¹s eldest son, Sulaiman Shukoh, was secretly done to death in the same State prison (May, 1662.) Meantime Shuja had gathered together a new army and advanced beyond Allahabad to make a second attempt for the throne. But he was signally defeated at Khajwa (5th January 1659), and driven back to Bengal, whence after a two years¹ struggle on land and river he was forced to flee miserably toArracan for refuge (12th May, 1660). Here he was massacred with his whole family for a plot against the Burmese king on whose hospitality he was living. Thus all his rivals being removed from his path,Aurangzib became the undisputed sovereign of India[10]."

The above passages are only indicative of the ruthless ambition of the Sultans and Mughal rulers. There is exhaustive historical evidence available to tear down the façade that the NCERT authors are assiduously building up to sanitise the true history. Ironically, while running down the ancient Indian kings, the NCERT authors conveniently gloss over the mass of historical evidence that conclusively indicates their humane approach in all spheres of life.

Tax collection: use of 'virtue words'

In any socio-cultural milieu, there are always some words which generate a positive image due to the value system of the people. Such words are called 'virtue words'. Propagandists use such words to create a positive image of desired persons.

Apart from labelling Indic kings as 'ruthlessly ambitious', they are presented as rapacious rulers who ill-treated their subjects. The following passage is about Chalukyas, Rashtrakutas and Gurjara Pratihar kings.

"In each of these states, resources were obtained from the producers – that is, peasants, cattle-keepers, artisans – who

[10] (Ahkam iAlamgiri, pp. 9-10)

were often persuaded or compelled to surrender part of what they produced. Sometimes these were claimed as "rent" due to a lord who asserted that he owned the land. Revenue was also collected from traders."

NCERT, class 7th, p 17

Notice the words ‘obtained from producers’, ‘were oftenpersuaded’, ‘compelled to surrender’and ‘claimed as rent’. The picture created is of kings who were extortionists. In stark contrast, when it comes toTughlaqs and Khiljis, the wording and adjectives change drastically.

“The Sultanate collected taxes from the peasantry and dispensed justice in its realm.”

NCERT, class 7th, p 35 “Like the earlier Sultans, the Khalji and Tughluq monarchs appointed commanders as governors of territories of varying sizes…In exchange for their military services, the muqtis collected the revenues of their assignments as salary…Care was taken that the muqti collected only the taxes prescribed by the state.” NCERT, class 7th, p 39

The phrases and their import changes to‘dispensed justice, ‘collected revenues’ which were ‘prescribed’ and ‘care was taken’. We will see that here too the portrayal has been reversed.

The glee of Ziauddin Barni

Wherever possible, the NCERT authors use half-truths to malign Manusmritiand portrayit as a ‘legaltext’ or ‘law book’ or ‘normative text’, but the same Manusmriti explicitly states that the population should not be burdened with unnecessary taxes. Whenever taxes are levied or collected, care should be taken that these do not exceed 1/6th of the production. This is the highest slab of tax prescribed whereas at many places it is stipulated as 1/8th or 1/12th of the production[11]. A similar taxation is stated by Kautilya in his Arth Shastra.

In direct contrast, we find that Ziauddin Barani, a disciple of NizamuddinAuliya, is full of joy stating that the Hindus have been crushed by the rigorous taxes imposed byAllauddin on them.

“After the promulgation of these interdicts, the Sultan requested the wise men to supplysome rules and regulations for grinding down the Hindus, and for depriving them of that wealth and propertywhich fosters disaffection

and rebellion. There was to be one rule for the payment of tribute applicable to all, from the khuts to the balahar and the heaviest tribute was not to fall upon the poorest. The Hindu was to be so reduced as to be left unable to keep a horse to ride on, to carryarms, to wear fine clothes, or to enjoyany of the luxuries of life…

They were so strictly carried out that the chaudharis and khuts and mukaddims were not able to ride on horseback, to find weapons, to get fine clothes, or to indulge in betel. The same rules for the collection of the tribute applied to all alike, and the people were brought to such a state of obedience that one revenue officer would string twenty khiits, mukaddims, or chaudharis together by the neck, and enforce payment by blows. No Hindu could hold up his head, and in their houses no sign of gold or silver, tankas or jitals, or of any superfluity was to be seen. These things, which nourish insubordination and rebellion, were no longer to be found. Driven bydestitution, the wives of the khuts and mukaddims went and served for hire in the houses of the Musulmans. Sharaf Kai, naib-wazir, so rigorously enforced his demands

[11] (Manusmriti, pp. 562-566)

and exactions against the collectors and other revenue officers, and such investigations were made, that everysingle jital against their names was ascertained from the books of the patwaris[12].”

The glee of Ziauddin and the rapacity ofAllauddin do not find any mention in our history books, and neither does the humane and just system of Manu or Kautilya. It is just the reverse of historical truth that is being taught in the name of history.

Jizya: kill them, enslave them

In fact, the NCERT authors go one step further and obliterate the humiliating tax called Jizya, which was imposed on the non-Muslim population during the Sultanate period.

“There were three types of taxes: (1) on cultivation called kharaj and amounting to about *50 percent* of the peasant’s produce, (2) on cattle and (3) on houses.”

NCERT, class 7th, p 39

The Islamic kings and their chroniclers were not as coy as NCERT authors. Theyhave left historical records of their deeds. The famous chronicler ofAllauddin Khilji, whom we have already mentioned, Ziauddin Barani explains the situation of taxation during his reign:

“Kazi Mughisuddin, of Bayanah, used to go to court and sit down in private audience with amirs. One day, when the efforts were being made for the increase of the tribute and of the fines and imposts, the Sultan told the Kazi that he had several questions to ask him, and desired him to speak the plain truth. The Kazi replied, “The angel of mydestinyseems to be close at hand, since your Majesty wishes to question me on matters of religion; if I speak the truth you will be

[12] (Barani, pp. 182-183)

Excerpt from Barani angryand kill me.” The Sultan said he would not kill him, and commanded him to answer his questions truly and candidly. The Kazi then promised to answer in accordance with what he had read in books.

The Sultan then asked, “How are Hindus designated in the law, as payers of tribute (Kharaj-guzar) or givers of tribute {kharaj-dih}?” The Kazi replied, “They are called payers of tribute, and when the revenue officer demands silver from them, they should, without question and with all humilityand respect, tender gold. Ifthe officer throws dirt into their mouths, they must without reluctance open their mouths wide to receive it. By doing so they show their respect for the officer. The due subordinationofthe zimmi(tribute-payer) is exhibited in this humble payment and by this throwing of dirt into their mouths. The glorification of Islam is a duty, and contempt of the Religion is vain. God holds them in contempt, for he says, ‘Keep them under in subjection.’ To keep the Hindus in abasement is

especially a religious duty, because they are the most inveterate enemies of the Prophet, and because the Prophet has commanded us to slay them, plunder them, and make them captive, saying, 'Convert them to Islam or kill them, enslave them and spoil their wealth and property.'No doctor but the great doctor (Hanifa), to whose school we belong, has assented to the imposition of the jizya (poll tax) onHindus. Doctors of other schools allow no other alternative, but, 'Death or Islam.'"

The Sultan smiled at this answer of the Kazi's, and said, "I do not understand any of the statements thou hast made; but this I have discovered, that the khuts and mukaddims ride upon fine horses, wear fine clothes, shoot with Persian bows, make war upon each other, and go out hunting; but of the khardj (tribute), jizya (poll tax), kari (house tax), and chari (pasture tax), they do not pay one jital. They levy separately the Khiit's (landowner's) share from the villages, give parties and drink wine, and many of them pay no revenue at all, either upon demand or without demand. Neither do theyshow any respect for my officers. This has excited my anger, and I have said to myself, 'Thou hast an ambition to conquer other lands, but thou hast hundreds of leagues of country under thy rule where proper obedience is not paid to thy authority. How, then, wilt thoumake other lands submissive? 'I have, therefore, taken my measures, and have made my subjects obedient, so that at my command they are ready to creep into holes like mice. Now you tell me that it is all in accordance with law that the Hindus should be reduced to the most abject obedience." Then the Sultansaid, "Oh, doctor, thou art a learned man, but thou hast had no experience; I am an unlettered man, but I have seen a great deal; be assured then that the Hindus will never become submissive and obedient till theyare reduced to poverty. I have, therefore, given orders that just sufficient shall be left to them from year to year, of corn, milk, and curds, but that they shall not be allowed to accumulate hoards and property[13]."

When the power shifted from Khiljis to Tughlaqs, the change in system was only in terminology. In his memoirs, Firoz Tughlaq pompouslyexplains his taxationsystem, whichNCERTauthors brush under carpet:

“In former reigns they used to collect frivolous, unlawful, and unjust cesses at the public treasury, such as the Mandavi bark, dalalat-i bazarha, jardri, amiri-tarab, gul-faroshi, jariba

[13] (ibid, pp. 183-185)

I tambol, changi-ghala, kitabi, Ulgari, mahi-faroshi, sabunkari, rismanfaroshi, raughan-kari, nukhud-biryan, tah-bazdri, jhaba, kimar-khana, dad-banki, kotwali, ihtisabi, karhi, chardi, musadarat. I had all these abolished and removed from the accounts, and any revenue collector who exacted these cesses from the people was to be brought to punishment for his offence. The money received in the public treasuryshould be derived from sources recognized by the Sacred Law, and approved by books of authority. First the kharaj or tenth from cultivated lands, then the zakat or alms, then the jizya or poll tax on Hindus and other separatists, then the khams or fifth of the spoil and of (the produce of) mines. No tax Note the unauthorized by the declarations of the book should be received in the public treasury[14].”

The list gives an idea of the various taxes under the pressure of which the local population was crushed. This flies in the face of the NCERT authors who claim and mention only three taxes. They are not only inaccurate in presenting facts, but are also lying.

The term ‘khams’ is of special importance here. It is an Arabic term which means, ‘the holy one-fifth’. Technically, it means onefifth of the plunder that is obtained by an Islamic army from infidels or Kafirs. It formed a standard source of revenue for the monarchs. Bands of marauders would go out to plunder, rape and kill the Kafir population and deposit one-fifth to the Sultan as his share. In simple words, ‘khams’ was a commission bandits gave the Sultan in lieu of his permission to loot the population. Since human greed has no limits, the system was subverted by earlier Sultans. The “pious” Firoz tughlaq rectified this error. It is best described in his words:

"Before mytime it was the rule and practice that in repressing infidelityfour-fifths of the spoil was appropriated to the public [14] (Futuhati Firoz Shahi, p. 377)

treasury and one-fifth was given to the captors; but the rule of the Law is that one-fifth should be taken by the State, and four-fifths allotted to the captors. The provisions of the Law had thus been entirely subverted. As the Law was thus set at nought, everyman looked upon himself as the lawful owner of the spoil he captured. Hence, children borne by female captives were the offspring of fornication. To prevent these irregularities I decreed that one-fifth (of the spoil) should be taken by the State, and four-fifths given to the captors[15]."

Note the words 'repressing infidelity'.All Islamic kings were clear that they have to repress the non-Muslims to spread their creed. This is the system NCERT authors are teaching as 'dispensed justice' in the kingdom.

The following passage is from FutuhatiFiroz Shahi, writtenbySultan Firoz Shah Tughlaq, who is considered to be a kind-hearted Sultan as compared to others. He was the third and the last of the Tughlaq clan to have ruled. His autobiography starts by telling us about the nature of his predecessors, who include two earlier Tughlaqs and before them the Khiljis:

"In the reigns of former kings the blood of many Musulmans had been shed, and many varieties of torture employed. Amputation of hands and feet, ears and noses; tearing out the eyes, pouring molten lead into the throat, crushing the bones of the hands and feet with mallets, burning the body with fire, driving iron nails into the hands, feet, and bosom, cutting the sinews, sawing men asunder; these and many similar tortures were practiced. The great and mercifulAllah made me, His servant, hope and seek for His mercy by devoting myself to prevent the unlawful killing of Musulmans,

[15] (ibid p. 377)

and the infliction of any kind of torture upon them or upon any men…All these things were practiced that fear and dread might fall upon the hearts of

men, and that the regulations of government might be duly maintained. By God's help I determined that the lives (khun) of Musulmans and true believers should be in perfect immunity, and whoever transgressed the Law should receive the punishment prescribed by the book and the decrees of judges[16]."

Two things are worth noting, the nature of earlier Sultans and confession of the author that the amnesty from terrors was granted only to Muslims. Contrary to the above-mentioned confession of the Sultan, the NCERT authors present these Sultans as 'dispensers of justice'.

Thereafter, Firoz Tughlaq explains the plight of non-Muslims as a result of policies that he has adopted:
"The Hindus and idol-worshipers had agreed to paythe money for toleration (zar-i zimmiya), and had consented to the poll tax (jizya), in return for which theyand their families enjoyed security. These people now erected new idol temples in the city and the environs in opposition to the Law of the Prophet which declares that such temples are not to be tolerated. Under Divine guidance I destroyed these edifices, and I killed those leaders of infidelity who seduced others into error, and the lower orders I subjected to stripes and chastisement, until this abuse was entirely abolished…

… This abuse had been so overlooked that the bazaar people took out there all sorts of provisions, and set up stalls and sold their goods. Some graceless Musulmans, thinking only of their own gratification, took part in these meetings. When *Excerpt* intelligence of this came to my ears my religious feelings*from*
Futuhati prompted me at once to put a stop to this scandal and offence *Firoz* to the religion of Islam. On the day of the assembling I went*Shahi* there in person, and I ordered that the leaders of these people

and the promoters of this abomination should be put to death,

… I destroyed their idol temples, and instead thereof raised mosques. I founded two flourishing towns (kasba), one called Tughlikpur, the other Salarpur. Where infidels and idolaters worshiped idols, Musulmans now, by God's mercy, perform their devotions to the true God. Praises ofAllah and theAzan (summons to prayer) are now heard there, and that place which was formerly the home of infidels has become the habitation of the faithful, who there repeat their creed and offer up their praises toAllah.

Information was brought to me that some Hindus had erected a new idol-temple in the village of Salihpur, and were performing worship to their idol. I sent some persons there to destroythe idol temple, and to put a stop to their pernicious incitements to error.

Some Hindus had erected a new idol-temple in the village of Kohna, and the idolaters used to assemble there and perform their idolatrous rites. These people were seized and brought before me. I ordered that the perverse conduct of the leaders of this wickedness should be publicly proclaimed, and that they should be put to death before the gate of the palace. I also ordered that the infidel books, the idols, and the vessels used in their worship, which had been taken withthem, should all be publicly burnt. The others were restrained by threats and punishments, as a warning to all men, that no zimmicould follow such wicked practices in a Musulman country. Figures and devices were painted and displayed on saddles, bridles, and collars, on censers, on goblets and cups, and flagons, on dishes and ewers, in tents, on curtains and on chairs, and upon all articles and utensils. Under Divine guidance and favour I ordered all pictures and portraits to be removed from these things, and that such articles only should be made as are approved and recognized by the Law. Those pictures and portraits which were painted on the doors and walls of palaces I ordered to be effaced. Among the gifts whichAllah bestowed upon me, His humble servant, was a desire to erect public buildings. So I built many mosques and colleges and monasteries, that the learned and the elders, the devout and the holy, might worship God in these edifices, and aid the kind builder with their prayers. I encouraged my infidel subjects to embrace the religion of the prophet, and I proclaimed that everyone who repeated the creed and became a Musulman should be exempt from the jizya, or poll-tax. Information of this came to the

ears of the people at large, and great numbers of Hindus presented themselves, and were admitted to the honour of Islam. Thus they came forward day by day from every quarter, and, adopting the faith, were exonerated from the jizya, and were favoured with presents and honours[17]."

Thus, the Hindus were not permitted the freedom of religion under Sultanate. The humiliating tax called Jizya was imposed to crush them under financial burden. This was a coercive tactic to force them to become Muslims. In history books, all this is replaced by a narrative that conveys just the opposite meaning. Such bigoted individuals 'dispensed justice in its realm', if NCERT authors are to be trusted.

Khilji-idolized by NCERT authors, despised by his subjects Allauddin Khilji, a Turk of Khilji/Ghilzai ethnicity, whose regime lasted for merely 20 years (1296-1316) is a case in point of how NCERT glorifies bigots to distort history.

"Alauddin's administrative measures were quite successful and chroniclers praised his reign for its cheap prices and efficient supplies."

NCERT, class 7th, p 40 Let us look at the 'praise' heaped on him by his chroniclers:

"Sultan 'Alau-d din, notwithstanding all his bravery and conquests, and abundant treasures and obedient armies, combining inhimselfallpersonalaccomplishments and worldly advantages, *was a tyrant*, and never used to hesitate at slaughter, burning, restricting the privileges of the army, or reducing the allowances of his servants, and was quite overcome byhis disposition towards temerityand oppression.

Although 'Alau-d din reigned successfully for some years, and all things prospered to his wish, and though he had wives and children, family and adherents, wealth and grandeur, still he did not escape retribution for the blood of his patron. *He shed more innocent blood than ever Pharaoh was guilty of*. Fate at length placed a betrayer in his path, by whom his family

was destroyed, and the retribution which fell upon it never had a parallel even in any infidel land[18].”

“Whenintelligence ofthis outbreakofthe new Muhammadans reached Dehli, the *crafty cruelty* which had taken possession of‘Alau-d dininduced him to order that the wives and children of all the mutineers, high and low, should be cast into prison. This was the beginning of the practice of seizing women and children for the faults of men. Up to this time no hand had ever been laid upon wives and children on account of men’s misdeeds[19].”

“The prosperity of ‘Aldu-d din at length declined. Success no longer attended him. Fortune proved, as usual, fickle, and destiny drew her poniard to destroy him. The overthrow of his throne and family arose from certain acts of his own. First, *He was jealous and violent in temper*. He removed from his service the administrators of his kingdom, and filled the places of those wise and experienced men with young slaves who were ignorant and thoughtless, and with eunuchs without intelligence[20].”

“Alau-d din was a sharp and brave man, who had often been victorious, and the ambition of sovereignty took possession of his mind, but he had no wealth but what he won by the point of his sword by despoiling the infidels[21].”

The adjectives being used by chroniclers are tyrant, jealous and violent tempered, crafty, cruel, Jihadi and the shedder of innocent blood.Add to this the sobriquet of *Khuni,* which he received due to the destruction and pillage he caused in Gujarat and we get the picture of a bloodthirstytyrant who was responsible for unmitigated misery of our countrymen. Yet, NCERT authors present him as an ‘able administrator’.

The quality of a ruler is best judged by the way his death is treated by the general public. Even this indicator exposes the true nature of Allaudin.

[19] (ibid, p. 164)

[20] (ibid, p. 207)

[21] (Rihla: History of India as told by Its Own Historians, 1871, p. 598)

“The Multanis engaged in their own business, and in every house drums and tabors were beaten, for the bazar people rejoiced over the death of ‘Alau-d din. They now sold their goods at their own price, and ... They reviled the late Sultan, and lauded the new one. The wages of labourers rose twentyfive per cent., and servants who had received ten or twelve tankas now got seventy, eighty, and a hundred tankas. The doors... Through the diminution of their tribute, the Hindus again found pleasure and happiness, and were beside themselves with joy.[22]"

Ziauddin Barani, Pp 212 – 213

Farid Khan: administrator or ghazi?

Farid Khan, also known as Sher Shah Suri, ruled for only five years (1540-1545) from Delhi with vastly fluctuating boundaries of his domain. Every Islamic despot, who gained access to the throne in any part of India, evidently considered his victory a part of Jihad.

“Although Suri dynasty ruled for only fifteen years, it introduced an administration that borrowed elements from Allauddin Khalji and made them more efficient.”

NCERT, class 7th, p 41

It is true that the Suri dynasty was also as fanatic and bigoted as was Khilji’s. The Jihadi mindset and behavior of Sher Shah Suri can be gauged from the two instances mentioned below:

“On Friday, the 9th of Rabi’u-l awwal, 952 a.h., when one watch and two hours of the day was over, Sher Shah called for his breakfast, and eat with his ‘ulama and priests, without whom he never breakfasted. In the midst of breakfast, Shaikh Nizam said, “There is nothing equal to a religious war against the infidels. If you be slain you become a Shaheed, if you live you become a ghazi.” When Sher Shah had finished eating his breakfast, he ordered Darya Khan to bring loaded shells, and went up to the top of a mound, and with his own hand shot of many arrows.[23]"

In the second instance, the cruel treatment to non-Muslim girls, who could not escape in time, can be gauged from the following narrative:

"To Habib Khan he gave secret orders that he should watch Bhaia Puran Mal, and take care he did not fly, and not to speak a word of this to any living creature, for that he (Sher Shah) had long entertained this design. When the elephants and troops were at the appointed spot, they reported it. Sher Shah ordered that at sunrise they should surround the tents of Bhaia Puran Mal. Puran Mal was told that they were surrounding his encampment, and going into the tent of his beloved wife Ratnavali, who sang Hindi melodies very sweetly, he cut off her head, and coming out said to his companions: "I have done this do you also slay your wives and families." While the Hindus were employed in putting their women and families to death, the Afghans on all sides commenced the slaughter of the Hindus, Puran Mal and his companions, like hogs at bay, failed not to exhibit valour and gallantry, but in the twinkling of an eye all were slain. Such of their wives and families as were not slain were captured. One daughter of Puran Mal and three sons of his elder brother were taken alive, the rest were all killed. Sher Khan gave the daughter

[23] (Khan A., Tarikhe Sher Shahi, p. 408)

of Puran Mal to some itinerant minstrels (bazigaran), that they might make her dance in the bazars, and ordered the boys to be castrated, that the race of the oppressor might not increase.[24]"

The use of virtue words by NCERT crafts an image for the students in which these rulers are "just and benevolent" and ancient kings "ruthless".

Demeaning the achievements of the ancient kings The levels to which NCERT authors go to run down ancient society and all aspects associated with it may elicit a sense of irritation or amusement in a learned reader, but the impact they can have on the mindset of children should not be underestimated. Wherever there is a sense of grandeur in-built in a narrative, associated with ancient society, it is delegitimised by adding conjectures to it.

"According to Greek sources, the Mauryan ruler had a standing army of 600,000 foot-soldiers, 30,000 cavalry and 9,000 elephants. *Some historians* consider these accounts to be exaggerated."

NCERT, class 12th, p 35

When a list of such 'some historians'was requested from NCERT through RTI application, the Council replied that no such record or list was available with them. The same bunch of authors, who find the accounts of Mauryan army 'exaggerated', do not bat an eyelid when a same number is used for the Roman army.

"Unlike the army of its rival in the Persian empire, which was a conscripted army, the Romans had a paid professional army where soldiers had to put in a minimum of 25 years of service. Indeed, the existence of a paid armywas a distinctive feature of the Roman Empire. The army was the largest

[24] (ibid. pp. 402-403)

single organised body in the empire (600,000 by the fourth century) and it certainly had the power to determine the fate of emperors. The soldiers would constantly agitate for better wages and service conditions."

NCERT, class 11th, p 60 **Fiction as proof of oppression by Indic kings**

The moral code of ancient kings, or a majority of them, stemmed from ideals enshrined in Indic scriptures, which stated the king was expected to treat his population as his children. Whenever he deviated from those ideals, he was criticised by different sections of society. But, the NCERT authors fall back on Panchtantra and Jataka stories, and there too, selectively extract passages to insinuate that the ancient rulers were exploitative:

"Popular perceptions of kings: What did subjects think about their rulers? Obviously, inscriptions do not provide all the answers. In fact, ordinary people rarely left accounts of their thoughts and experiences. Nevertheless, historians have tried to solve this problem by examining stories contained in

anthologies such as the *Jatakas* and the *Panchatantra*. Many of these stories probably originated as popular oral tales that were later committed to writing. The *Jatakas* were written in Pali around the middle of the first millennium CE. One story known as the *Gandatindu Jataka* describes the plight of the subjects of a wicked king; these included elderly women and men, cultivators, herders, village boys and even animals. When the king went in disguise to find out what his subjects thought about him, each one of them cursed him for their miseries, complaining that they were attacked by robbers at night and by tax collectors during the day. To escape from this situation, people abandoned their village and went to live in the forest. As this story indicates the relationship between a king and his subjects, especially the rural population, could often be strained – kings frequently tried to fill their coffers bydemanding high taxes, and peasants particularly found such demands oppressive. Escaping into the forest remained an option, as reflected in the *Jataka* story. Meanwhile, other strategies aimed at increasing production to meet growing demand for taxes also came to be adopted."

NCERT, class 12th, p 38

On the basis of a fictional story, the kings are painted as 'wicked'in nature who 'tried to fill their coffers' and these demands were 'oppressive'. Conclusion for the students should be that the rulers of this period, who were definitely Hindu, were wicked, greedy, selfish, oppressive and exploitative. What is the base of such 'perception of the king'? A fictional tale from Jataka stories! Meanwhile, in case of Sultans and Mughals, even historical facts are ignored.

The Sultans and the Mughals absolutelycrushed the local population, not in some fictional story, but in real life.Yet, the NCERT narrative presents them in a benevolent light. Even if Jataka Tales or Panchtantra has to be explained to the students, why not give stories of just and righteous kings, which these books are full of?

The storyof king Makhadeva who ruled from Mithila was righteous and ruled righteously[25]. Likewise, the story of Prince Silava, the son of

Brahamadutt, who ruled from Benares, was such a king. He abounded in patience, loving kindness and mercy. He cherished all creatures alike with fond love of a father for his child. He kept the commandments and observed the fast-days.[26] Why not tell stories

[25] (Jataka Tales, p. 18)
[26] (ibid, p. 52)

of such kings, if they have to, by any means? Maybe this quote from the Nazi propaganda-in-chief can explain the NCERT approach:

"It would not be impossible to prove with sufficient repetition and a psychological understanding of the people concerned that a square is in fact a circle. They are mere words, and words can be molded until they clothe ideas and disguise."

Joseph Goebbels **Who were the real heroes?**
Counting from 636AD, when Islamised Arabs attacked Thane near Mumbai to impose their peculiar belief system on Hindustan, it took the combined might of Arabs, Ghaznavids and Turks nearly 560 years to gain a foothold in India. It was a long and bloody struggle in which Indians kept on fighting the most ruthless marauders to save their pious way of life. This heroic resistance, in the face of a ruthless foe and the sole world power at the time, (Arab Empire) is completely erased from the collective memory of the nation. The following passage is about Chalukyas, Rashtrakutas and Gurjara Pratihar kings:

"Many of these new kings adopted high sounding titles such as maharaja adhiraja (great king, overlord of kings), tribhuvana – chakravartin (lord of the three worlds) and so on. However, in spite of such claims, they often shared power with their samantas as well as with associations of peasants, traders and Brahmans."

NCERT, class 7th, p 17 A twelve-year-old child will gain an impression that these kings were pompous to adopt such 'high sounding' titles although they were small-time chiefs. This impression will be permanent because the

formidable battles that these kings fought to defeat the barbaric invaders are suppressed by the NCERT authors. For example, when Qutubuddin Aibak attacked Gujarat in 1197, his armies were overwhelmed by the resistance that Chalukya kings presented to them. Aibak could gain a temporary victory only by attacking an unprepared army during the night, an act which was against the code of ethics of the Hindu kings. But, the victory was short lived as Bhimadev II of the Chalukya dynastyregained the whole kingdom from the invaders, within four years.
The same set of NCERT authors find nothing 'high sounding'when someone named Abu'l-Fath Jalal ud-din Muhammad adopts the title Akbar which means 'The Great' or when someone named Noor uddin Muhammad Salim proclaims to be 'conqueror of the world' (Jahangir) or whensomeone named ShahabuddinMuhammad becomes 'ruler of the entire world' (Shahjahan) or when someone named Abul Muzaffar Muhi-ud-Din Muhammad Aurangzeb proclaims himselves to be 'conqueror of the world' (Alamgir).

Transforming bigots into heroes
Bias of the NCERT historians favours not only Islamic rulers but even foreign mercenaries involved in 'Jihad'during the period. An example of such deceitful representation is their depiction of Moroccan traveller Ibn Batuta. The adjectives used for describing him are, once again, sugarcoated. He is termed as a 'globetrotter'. He belonged to a 'respectable family' and had a 'scholastic education'.

"Travelling overland through Central Asia, Ibn Battuta reached Sind in 1333. He had heard about Muhammad bin Tughlaq, the Sultan of Delhi, and lured by his reputation as a generous patron of arts and letters, set off for Delhi, passing through Multan and Uch. The Sultan was impressed by his scholarship, and appointed him the qazi or judge of Delhi."

NCERT, class 12th, p 118 This passage serves two purposes, a classic example of killing two birds with one stone. It portrays Muhammad Tughlaq as a 'generous patron of arts and letters' and simultaneously creates an image of Ibn Batuta as a learned man. But, the historical facts tell us that both of them were religious bigots.

Regarding Sultan Muhammad Tughlaq, as seen in the preceding pages, he was a bigot who imposed the debilitating Jizya on nonMuslims. He rejoiced at their conversion to Islam under the crushing burden of this tax. His disdain for Indians, particularly for Hindus, can be gauged from the fact that he used to appoint foreigners (only Muslims) on all major administrative posts. The fire of Jihad of this Sultan was such that he used the title of Mujahid (Jihadi) for himself.

"It is the custom of the Sultan of India, Abul Mujahid Muhammad Shah, to honour strangers, to favour them, and to distinguish them in a manner quite peculiar, by appointing them to governments or to places of importance. Most of his courtiers, chamberlains, wazirs, magistrates, and brothersin-law are foreigners.[27]"

Another feature of the Muslim rule was that invariably all the honorable posts were offered to foreigners owing allegiance to Islam. But not at a single place these rulers are highlighted as foreign rulers.

"When a slave of the Sultan, named Ibne Malik Shah escaped…the Khurasani Amirs and other foreigners were scared of this uprising as he was a Hindustani and the Hindustanis hated foreigners because the Sultan gave special honour to these foreigners[28]."

[27] (Tughlaq Kaaleen Bharat by S. A. A. Rizvi p 183) [28] (ibid pp 222-223)

The preference of foreigners was one of the reasons for resentment among the local population against the Sultan. But the main reason for this opposition was the religious persecution of non-Muslims. This persecution was so severe that a large number of non-Muslims preferred to live in forests rather than in the lands under his grip. And this was also a reason that all fortune hunters in the Islamic world thronged to his court. Ibn Batuta was one such opportunist. The NCERT authors are trying to hide the Jihadi fervor of this bigot although he himself gleefully explains the Jihad expeditions that he undertook in India.

“When we reached the city called Kol (present dayAligarh), we got the information that Hindu Kafirs have surrounded a town called Jalaali. Therefore we proceeded in that direction. This town is at a distance of seven miles from Kol. In the meantime, the Kafirs started a battle with the residents of the town and the residents were on the brink of destruction. Till the time we attacked the Kafirs, they did not get any information about our arrival.Although their army consisted of 1000 cavalryand 3000 foot soldiers, but we killed them all and took possession of their horses and weapons. On our side, twenty three horsemen and fifty five foot soldiers were killed….The Kafirs repeatedly attacked Jalaali by emerging from mountains and we kept on fighting them along with the Amirs of the town.[29]”

This ‘scholar’for NCERT authors volunteered for an armed raid, which he titled as “Ghazwah” in his book Rihla. Ghazwah is an Arabic word denoting any armed raid on non-Muslims undertaken to kill them and plunder their property, their women and their children. Originally, this term was used for the raids in which the Islamic prophet Muhammad himself participated[30]. Anyone who joins such a raid is called a Ghazi. In his memoir, Batuta proudly proclaims him leading a ghazwah against Kafirs, in which “Mussalman armyemerged victorious by the grace ofAllah”; many Kafirs were killed and others imprisoned. He kept one Kafir woman, named Lemki, for himself. Her husband begged him to release her in lieu of money which Batuta refused. He kept the woman as his concubine and changed her name to Mubaraka[31]. Elsewhere in his book, he tells us that a girl child was born through one of his concubines. [32]

The missing Tughlaqi farman

The term Tughlaqi farman is often used to denote any senseless authoritarian order in our country. The incident behind the currency of this phrase is very interesting. It brings to light the cruelty and heavy-handedness with which the Sultans ruled. However, in line with the current policyof NCERT, anything which portrays invaders in bad light is not to be disclosed to the citizens of our country. The same unwritten policy is used in this case also.

It so happened that Muhammad Tughlaq, under one of his whimsical moods, decided to get the cityof Delhi vacated. He issued an order, 'farman', that all the residents shift to Daulatabad. Ibn Batuta gives the account:

"The one action for which the Sultan is criticized the most is his act of forcibly evicting the residents of Delhi from the city. The reason for this is that the residents used to drop letters sealed and marked 'to be read by the Sultan only' in the court of the Sultan. In this letters the Sultan was criticized and abused. These letters were dropped in the durbar at

[30] (Aboul-Enein p 6)
[31] (Tughlaq Kaaleen Bharat by S.A.A.Rizvi, p 291)

night. When he opened these letters, he used to find them full of abuses. The Sultan decided to ruin Delhi. He bought their houses from the residents of Delhi and ordered them to seek refuge in Daulatabad. The residents did not find it acceptable. He made an announcement that the city has to be vacated in three days and no one should remain in the city after the expiryofhis deadline. Manypeople started emigrating but some of them hid in their houses. The Sultan gave orders to find out if there are some residents hiding in the city. The search by his slaves produced two men in the city. One of the poor guys was blind and the other was handicapped. Both of them were produced in front of the Sultan. The Sultan blasted the handicapped victim from a Manjanik (large catapult). The blind man was tied and forcibly dragged up to Daulatabad, which is at a distance of 40 days journey. He was shredded to pieces on the way and by the time they reached Daulatabad, only one leg was left. When the residents saw this horrific scene, all of them left their wealth and property and vacated the city.

I have come to know from a reliable source that one night the Sultan climbed the roof of his palace and observed that there is no sign of fire or smoke from the city, indicating that the city was completely empty. The Sultan said, "Now I am satisfied and my heart is at peace". Then he ordered the residents of other cities to populate Delhi. The city is so vast but only a

few came to live in it. Delhi is one of the largest cities of the world. When we entered Delhi, there was no population in it and only a small number of houses were occupied.[33]"

The same condition of Delhi is described elsewhere as: "He describes Dehli as a most magnificent city, its mosque and walls without an equal on earth; but although the king was then repeopling it, it was almost a desert.' The greatest city in the world, he said, had the fewest inhabitants.[34]"

Now, this is one of the most interesting episodes in the history of Delhi. It is in the same book—Rihla of Ibn Batuta—from which NCERT authors pick up many anecdotes, but fail to narrate this horrible story to our children. On the contrary, the picture presented is just the opposite.

"Ibn Battuta described Delhi as a vast city, with a great population, the largest in India. Daulatabad (in Maharashtra) was no less, and easily rivaled Delhi in size."

NCERT, class 12th, p 127

The Egalitarian Mughals!
The NCERT text proceeds to prove that the Mughal emperors were egalitarian in their outlook.

"This eventually led Akbar to the idea of *sulh – i – kul* or "universal peace". This idea of tolerance did not discriminate between people of different religions in his realm. Instead it focused on a system of ethics – honesty, justice, peace – that was universally applicable. Abul Fazl helped Akbar in framing a vision of governance around this idea of sulh-i-kul. This principle of governance was followed by Jahangir and Shah Jahan as well."

NCERT, class 7th, p 54 If this assertion by NCERT authors is to be believed then Jahangir and Shah Jahan treated all religions and their followers with equal

[34] (Batuta, History of India as told by its own Historians, 1871, p. 585, Vol:3)

respect. Unfortunately for these authors, Jahangir, in his memoirs, proudly flaunts his bigotry. He tells us that he killed Guru Arjun Dev, the renowned saint from Punjab, just because he took the liberty of applying saffron on the forehead of one of Jahangir's men.

"In Gobindwal, which is on the river Biyah (Beas), there was a Hindu named Arjun, in the garments of sainthood and sanctity, so much so that he had captured many of the simplehearted of the Hindus, and even of the ignorant and foolish followers of Islam, by his ways and manners, and they had loudly sounded the drum of his holiness. They called him Guru, and from all sides stupid people crowded to worship and manifest complete faith in him. For three or four generations (of spiritual successors) they had kept this shop warm. Many times it occurred to me to put a stop to this vain affair or to bring him into the assembly of the people of Islam. At last when Khusrau passed long this road this insignificant fellow proposed to wait upon him. Khusrau happened to halt at the place where he was, and he came out and did homage to him. He behaved to Khusrau in certain special ways, and made on his forehead a fingermark in saffron, which the Indians (Hinduwan) callqashqa, and is considered propitious. When this came to my ears and I clearly understood his folly, I ordered them to produce him and handed over his houses, dwelling places, and children to Murtaza Khan, and having confiscated his property commanded that he should be put to death[35]."

The murder of the saint-guru is not a one off instance of Jahangir's fanaticism. He was equally intolerant of all the sects. He himself explains his attitude towards other religions.Though NCERTauthors

[35] (Tuzuki Jahangiri, pp. 72-73)

are trying to project Jains as a community different from Hindus, but for all Islamic invaders, including Jahangir, a fourth generation Mughal, Jains were a 'tribe ofinfidelHindus'. He gleefullydescribes how he decreed the ousters of Shwetambar Jains (Sewras) from his dominions:

"At this stage news came that Man Singh Sewra had surrendered his soul to the lords of hell. The account of this in brief is that the Sewras are a tribe of infidel Hindus who always go with their head and feet bare.
One set of them root out their hair, their beards, and moustaches, while another set shave them. Theydo not wear sewn garments, and their central principle is that no living creature should be injured. The Banyans regard them as their pirs and teachers, and even worship them.

The sect of the Sewras exists in most of the cities of India, but is especially numerous in Gujarat. As the Banyans are the chief traders there, consequently the Sewras also are plentiful. Besides making idol-temples for them, they have built houses for them to dwell in and to worship in. In fact, these houses are the headquarters of sedition. The Banyans send their wives and daughters to the Sewras, who have no shame or modesty.

All kinds of strife and audacity are perpetrated by them. I therefore ordered that the Sewras should be expelled, and I circulated farmans to the effect that wherever there were Sewras in my empire they should be turned out[36]."

As for Shah Jahan, famous historian Jadunath Sarkar explains that:"Shah Jahan was a bigot. His early hatred of Christians had been noticed by Sir Thomas Roe (Kerr, ix. 262). After his

[36] (ibid, pp. 437-438)

accession he grew averse to giving high posts to Rajputs. (Adab, 29a). The demolitionofHindu temples and desecration of idols mark his reign only to a less extent than his son's. He refused to release Rajah Indradyumna of Dhamdhera (Malwa) from prison for a ransom of Rs. 50,000, and insisted on his turning Muslim as the price of his liberation, though Aurangzib himself pleaded for the abatement of this last condition lest it should hinder his taking possession of his estate and collecting the promised tribute[37]."

When Mughal forces attacked the Bundelas in 1635, a more terrible fate awaited the captive ladies who survived:
"Mothers and daughters of kings, they were robbed of their

religion, and forced to lead the infamous life of the Mughal harem, to be the unloved plaything of their master's passion for a day or two and then to be doomed to sigh out their days like bondwomen, without knowing the dignity of a wife or the joy of a mother. Sweeter far for them would have been death from the hands of their dear ones than submission to a race that knew no generosity to the fallen, no chivalry to the weaker sex. Three captives of tender age, (two sons and one grandson of Jhujhar) were made Musalmans. Another son, Udaybhan, and Shyam Dawa the old and faithful minister of the house, who had taken refuge in Golkonda and been delivered to Shah Jahan, refused to apostatize and were executed in cold blood[38]."

When the Sultans adn Mughals were ruling, Brahmans were the most persecuted lot. Still NCERT authors are trying to blame them for the atrocities of Islamic rulers.

[37] (History ofAuragzeb, p. 249) [38] (ibid, p. 27)

"Inlarge parts of the subcontinent, societywas alreadydivided according to the rules of varna. These rules, as prescribed by the Brahmanas, were accepted by the rulers of large kingdoms. The difference between the high and low, and between the rich and poor, increased. Under the Delhi Sultans and the Mughals, this hierarchy between social classes grew further."

NCERT, class 7th, p 91

However, Bernier was appalled to see the all-round misery and poverty. He took special notice of absence of precious metals like gold and silver from Indian household. He explains it as:

"We have seen how in the *Indies* the gold and silver disappear in consequence of the tyranny of Timariots, Governors, and Revenue contractors—a tyranny which even the monarch, if so disposed, has no means of controlling in provinces not contiguous to his capital—a tyranny

often so excessive as to deprive the peasant and artisan of the necessaries of life, and leave them to die of misery and exhaustion—a tyranny owing to which those wretched people either have no children at all, or have them only to endure the agonies of starvation, and to die at a tender age—a tyranny, in fine, that drives the cultivator of the soil from his wretched home to some neighbouring state, in hopes of finding milder treatment, or to the army, where he becomes the servant of some trooper. As the ground is seldom tilled otherwise than by compulsion, and as no person is found willing and able to repair the ditches and canals for the conveyance of water, it happens that the whole country is badly cultivated, and a great part rendered unproductive from the want of irrigation. The houses, too, are left in a dilapidated condition, there being few people who will either build new ones, or repair those which are tumbling down. The peasant cannot avoid asking himself this question: 'Why should I toil for a tyrant who may come tomorrow and lay his rapacious hands upon all I possess and value, without leaving me, if such should be his humour, the means to drag on my miserable existence?'—The Timariots, Governors, and Revenue contractors, on their part reason in this manner: 'Why should the neglected state of this land create uneasiness in our minds?And why should we expend our own money and time to render it fruitful.' We may be deprived of it in a single moment, and our exertions would benefit neither ourselves nor our children. Let us draw from the soil all the money we can, though the peasant should starve or abscond, and we should leave it, when commanded to quit, a dreary wilderness.'

The facts I have mentioned are sufficient to account for the rapid decline of the *Asiatic* states. It is owing to this miserable system of government that most towns in *Hindoustan* are made up of earth, mud, and other wretched materials; that there is no city or town which, if it be not already ruined and deserted, does not bear evident marks of approaching decay[39]."

To hide this ugly facet of despotic rule by Turks and Mughals, NCERT has put anentirelynew spin tothe disappearance of precious metals. While dealing with the issue, they state that:

Historians are divided on this issue. Some suggest that with the collapse of the Western Roman Empire long-distance trade declined, and this affected the prosperity of the states, communities and regions that had benefited from it. Others argue that new towns and networks of trade started emerging

[39] (Travels in The Mogul Empire, p. 205)

around this time. They also point out that though finds of coins of that time are fewer, coins continue to be mentioned in inscriptions and texts.

NCERT, class 12th, p 45

All historical records and chronicles give evidence of the ruthless manner in which Sultans and Mughals leached the wealth and splendor of our country, but for NCERT authors, the blame should always rest on Brahmans because telling the truth will not suit their propagandist agenda.

Just rule or glorified brigandage

Another hallmark of NCERT authors is that they use extremely vague language to produce the desired effect. For example, to peddle the lie that Mughal emperors were benevolent in nature, they have used passages like this one:

"The connection between royal justice and the imperial court was emphasized by Shah Jahan in his newly constructed court in the red fort at Delhi. Behind the emperor's throne were pietra dura inlays that depicted the legendary Greek god Orpheus playing the lute. It was believed that Orpheus's music could calm ferocious beasts until theyresided together peaceably. The construction of Shah Jahan's audience hall aimed to communicate that the king's justice would treat the high and the low as equals creating a world where all could live together in harmony."

NCERT, Pp 68-69, class 7th

High sounding words but without any substance! No policy or instance of 'royal justice'or 'king's justice'is mentioned. In direct contrast to the rosy

picture being painted by NCERT authors, the historical facts expose even Akbar, for the atrocities and agony heaped on the population

"In this year (982) an order was promulgated for improving the cultivation of the country, and for bettering the condition of the raiyats. All the parganas of the country, whether dry or irrigated, whether in towns or hills, in deserts and jungles, by rivers, reservoirs, or wells, were all to be measured, and every such piece of land as, upon cultivation, would produce one kror of tankas, was to be divided off, and placed under the charge of an officer to be called krori, who was to be selected for his trustworthiness, and whether known or unknown to the revenue clerks and treasurers. So that in the course of three years all the uncultivated land might be brought into cultivation, and the public treasury might be replenished. Security was taken from each one of these officers. The measurement was begun in the vicinity of Fathpur. One kror was named Adampur, another Shethpur, another Ayubpur, and so on, according to the names of the various prophets (and patriarchs). Regulations were circulated, but eventuallythese regulations were not observed as they ought to have been. A great portion of the country was laid waste through the rapacity of the kroris, the wives and children of the raiyats were sold and scattered abroad, and everything was thrown into confusion. But the kroris were brought to account by Raja Todar Mal, and many good men died from the severe beatings which were administered, and from the tortures of the rack and pincers. So many died from protracted confinement in the prisons of the revenue authorities, that there was no need of the executioner or swordsman, and no one cared to find them graves or graveclothes[40]."

[40] (Badauni, pp. 513-514)

In all these instances, the contrast between what the NCERT wants to project, and the historical facts is glaring. History textbooks are reduced to hagiographies of Mughals written by NCERT authors.

Mughals as secular, benevolent and Indian

As alreadydiscussed Jizya was a tax imposed on Hindus during the Sultanate period. We saw that the poorer sections of Indic society were crushed under this tax and to save themselves from the economic hardships,

a large number of them converted to Islam. Let us look at the historical and religious context of this tax. Muhammad, the Islamic prophet, imposed this tax on a tribe of Jews. The verse of Quran [Quran 8:29], which stipulates this tax is:

“Fight against such of those who have been given the Scripture as believe not inAllah nor the Last Day, and forbid not that whichAllah hath forbidden by His messenger, and follow not the Religion of Truth, until they pay the tribute readily, being brought low.”

Notice the words ‘being brought low’. The essence of this phrase is conveyed byits equivalent Hindi translation which uses the term, ‘t +yhy gkdj’. It is not just a tax, it is a statement. It is an Islamic statement that you are being humiliated because you are a nonMuslim.Anyone who accedes to the conditions of Jizya was known as a zimmi. To ensure humiliation of the zimmi, an elaborate set of instructions was used. In accordance to this code of tax collection, the zimmi was to come on foot and pay Jizya with his hand; the tax commissioner was to remain seated and the zimmi *had to* stand; and the hand of the commissioner should be above while the hand of the zimmi was to be turned upwards. The official was not to take the Jizya from him but to snatch it from him after the henchmen of commissioner had shouted upon him the words, ‘O zimmi! Pay Jizya’[41]. This tax system is a part of the Islamic law called Sharia. The term ‘who have been given the Scriptures’ refers to Jews and Christians, the adherents of the two other Abrahamic creeds. The Arabic term for the same is "vgysfdr kc". In the Islamic world view, only Islam is the true religion and Allah is the only true God. As a corollary, Judaism and Christianity are false religions and at the same time Jesus and Yahweh, the Biblical Gods, are also false Gods. Thus all non-Muslims are considered debased and have no right to live an honorable life. To live in Dar’ul Islam, or the land of Islam, they must pay to survive. But for all other religions even this degraded life is not permissible. This is a reason why all the Parsis were given a choice between Islam and death in erstwhile Persia. The Zoroastrians, who were called ‘Atish parast’ or fire worshippers, were either killed or converted. All the Buddhists called ‘But parast’ in Middle and CentralAsian countries suffered

the same fate. The word 'But' is distorted version of 'Buddh'. On the annihilation of Buddhism, Dr BR Ambedkar tells us that:

"The Musalman invaders sacked the Buddhist universities of Nalanda, Vikramshila, Jagaddala, Odantapuri to name a few. They razed to the ground the Buddhist monastaries with which the country was studded. The monks fled away in thoudands to Nepal, Tibet and other places outside India. A very large number were killed outright by the Muslims commanders. How the Buddhist priesthood perished by the Muslim invaders has been recorded bythe Muslim historians themselves…Such was the slaughter of Buddhist priesthood perpetrated by the Islamic invaders. The axe was struck at the veryroot. For by killing Buddhist priesthood, Islam killed

[41] Mirzâ MuHammad Hasan alias 'Alî MuHammad Khân Bahâdur *Mir' at-i AHmadî*, ed. by Sayyid Nawab Ali, Gackwad's Oriental Series, No. XXXIII, Baroda, 1928, I, pp. 296-297

Buddhism. This was the greatest disaster that befell the religion of the Buddha in India."[42]

With this background, let us look how the NCERT authors present the situation:
"Theoretically, Muslim rulers were to be guided bythe *ulama,* who were expected to ensure that they ruled according to the *shari'a*. Clearly, the situation was complicated in the subcontinent, where there were populations that did not subscribe to Islam. It is in this context that the category of the zimmi, meaning protected (derived from theArabic word zimma, protection) developed for peoples who followed revealed scriptures, such as the Jews and Christians, and lived under Muslim rulership. They paid a tax called jizya and *gained the right* to be protected by Muslims. In India this *status was extended* to Hindus as well." (emphasis ours). NCERT, class 12th, p 149

Notice the duplicity. It is the same band of authors who invent conflicts and hostilities between different Indic traditions to depict a debased society, but when it comes to an organised form of gangsterism, they just twist the words to give an exactly opposite picture.

"As you will see (Chapter 9), rulers such as the Mughals came to regard themselves as emperors of not just Muslims but of all peoples. In effect, rulers often adopted a fairly flexible policy towards their subjects. For instance, several rulers gave land endowments and granted tax exemptions to Hindu, Jaina, Zoroastrian, Christian and Jewish religious institutions and also expressed respect and devotion towards

[42] (The Decline and Fall of Buddhism, vol 3, pp. 229-238)

non-Muslim religious leaders. These grants were made by several Mughal rulers, includingAkbar andAurangzeb." NCERT, class 12th, p 149

According to the general perception, out of the six Mughal kings, Akbar and Jahangir are made out to be the most secular, just and benevolent.

We have already seen Jahangir's "secular" nature with respect to his treatment of Guru Arjun Dev and Jains. In his autobiography, he flaunts the treatment he gave to the Hindu temple at Pushkar in Rajasthan, in which an idol of the 'Varah' avatar of Vishnu was present:

"I went to see that temple. I found a form cut out of black stone, which from the neck above was in the shape of a pig's head, and the rest of the body was like that of a man. *The worthless religion of the Hindus is this*, that once on a time for some particular object the Supreme Ruler thought it necessary to show himself in this shape; on this account they hold it dear and worship it. *I ordered them to break that hideous form* and throw it into the tank[43]." (emphasis ours).

AlthoughAkbar onwards, the Mughals were born in India, but their allegiance was never to the country or its residents. Their antipathy to their subjects was so extensive that most of the official posts were filled by Islamic foreigners. When Francois Bernier, the Frenchman who visited

India in the seventeenth century, got off the ship in the city of Surat, he wrote:

"I found that the reigning prince was named Chah Jehan or 'King of the World'. According to the annals of the country, he was the son of Jehan Guyre, or 'Conqueror of the World,

[43] (Tuzuki Jahangiri, p. 254)

and grandson of Ekbar, or 'the Great… This Tamerlan, so celebrated for his conquests, married a kinswoman, the only daughter of the prince who then reigned over the people of Great Tartary called Mogols; a name which they have communicated to the foreigners who now govern Indoustan, the country of the Indous, or Indians. It must not, however, be inferred that *offices of trust and dignity* are exclusively held by those of the Mogol race, or that they alone obtain rank in the army. These situations *are filled indifferently by them and strangers from all countries*; the greater part by Persians, some by Arabs, and others by Turks. *To be considered a Mogol, it is enough if a foreigner have a white face and profess Mahometanism;* in contradistinction to the Christians of Europe, who are called Franguis and to the Indous, whose complexion is brown, and who are Genitles[44]." (emphasis ours).

To further spread their narrative among children, the NCERT authors cherry pick historical documents or phrases to fit into the version designed by them. To depict Aurangzeb as a person endowed with secular approach, they furnish a document:

"Here is an excerpt from a letter written byAurangzeb to a Jogi in 1661-62: The possessor of the sublime station, Shiv Murat, Guru Anand Nath Jio! May your Reverence remain in peace and happiness ever under the protection of Sri Shiv Jio! … A piece of cloth for the cloak and a sum of twenty five rupees which have been sent as an offering will reach (Your Reverence) … Your Reverence may write to us whenever there is any service which can be rendered by us."

[44] (Travels in The Mogul Empire, p. 3)

Teaser that follows up is – "Identify the deity worshipped by the Jogi. Describe the attitude of the emperor towards the Jogi." NCERT, class 12th, p 150

The second stratagem they have used to depict Mughals in general and Aurangzeb in particular is:
"All Mughal emperors gave grants to support the building and maintenance of places of worship. Even when temples were destroyed during war, grants were later issued for their repair – as we know from the reigns of Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb."
NCERT, class 12th, p 234

Thus, a one-off letter to a Jogi and grants to temples are proof that they were benevolent rulers. What does Aurangzeb tell about his attitude during his early days? Historian Jadunath Sarkar gives a glimpse into the mind of a young Aurangzeb.

"Of Aurangzib's life during this period we have his own reminiscences, written in old age to his grandson Bidar Bakht: "The village of Sattarah near Aurangabad was my hunting ground. Here on the top of a hill, stood a temple with an image of Khande Rai. By God's grace I demolished it, and forbade the temple dancers (murlis) to ply their shameful profession[45]."

Another clearer proof of his religious bigotry is furnished by the following letter which he wrote during this time period to the Prime Minister Sadullah Khan:

"The Brahman Chhabila Ram, the qanungo of property-tax ofthe cityofBihar, had uttered improper words withreference to the Prophet. After investigation and verification of the

[45] (History ofAuragzeb, p. 171)

charge by order of the Emperor, Zulfiqar Khan and other officers of the place had beheaded him, as was required by justice. Now, the scholar Mulla Muhan has written to me that the brothers of the accursed misbeliever, out of bigotry, have sought justice at the Imperial Court against Shaikh Muhammad Muala, the lord justice, and ShaikhAbdul Mani, the ecclesiastical judge of the province. I, therefore, remind you of this affair, as it is proper for all Muslims to do their utmost to assert the rules of the Prophet's religion, and it is the duty of kings and nobles to protect the scholars of Islam in enforcing the injunctions of the HolyLaw.You should exert yourself more than your peers to close the road of the complaint of this wretched tribe [to the Emperor's feet] and to take care of the letters {i.e., explanations) of the guardians of the honour of the Faith[46]."

As for his having a soft corner for Jogis, no Hindu saint was permitted to propagate his faith. Those who tried to do so were either killed or arrested. The entry dated June 3, 1669, in Maasiri Alamgiri tells us:

"It was reported that the wandering Hindu saint, Uddhav Bairagi, was confined in the chabutra of the police station in punishment for his seducing men to false beliefs, and that two Rajputs who were his disciples used to visit Qazi 'Abul Mukaram, son of Qazi Abdul Wahhab, for the purpose of trying to get him released, and that finding an opportunity they had fatally stabbed him on the way with daggers. The Emperor ordered all the three (Hindus) to be executed[47]."

If we start from Babur, thenAurangzeb was the sixth Mughal in a row to gain access to the throne in India. Despite such a long time [46] (ibid, pp. 173-174)
[47] (Sarkar, MaasiriAlamgiri, pp. 53-54)

interval, the Mughals neither considered Hindustan their owncountry nor its inhabitants worthy of any love. A remarkable incident that reveals this aspect is explained as follows:

"A courtier of Indian origin made suit that two house-hold slaves had finished memorizing the Quran and hoped to be permitted to recite it to His Majesty. The Emperor ordered them to be brought to him at night. When

they appeared and the courtier said, “The sons of so and so are present,” His Majesty remarked, “Don’t utter the name of a heretic (Shia).” The courtier was surprised and said, “I was speaking of soand so.”The Emperor replied, “Well, if you don’t believe me, ask the names of both.” He went out, asked, and reported, “They are called HasanAli and Husain Ali.” The Emperor retorted, “My parents and I are the sacrifice ofAli. What connections have Hindustanis with this name? Through evil desires they are afflicted with friendship for the heretical Shi’as, leave the right path and go astray. May God awaken us from the drowsiness of the negligent!”[48]

Despite such bigotrybeing openlyexhibited bymost of the Mughals, they are presented as benevolent with judicious use of virtue words by NCERT authors:

“A UNIFYING FORCE – Mughal chronicles present the empire as comprising many different ethinic and religious communities – Hindus, Jainas, Zoroastrians and Muslims. As the source of all peace and stability the emperor stood above all religious and ethnic groups, mediated among them, and ensured that justice and peace prevailed.”

NCERT, class 12th, p 233

[48] (ibid, p. 190)

When he had grown old, his bigotry remained unabated. To guage the hatred that Aurangzeb harboured against non-Muslims, an instance from his own chronicles should be studied:

“The Emperor learnt from the letter of Firuz Jang Khan, who was appointed to take care of the Base Camp (bungah) at Islampuri and to guard the road from Burhanpur to the place of the Emperor[1]s stay—”The tomb of the old slave girl, the mother of [this] hereditary servant, is on the other side of the river Bhima. It is necessary to increase the population ofthe grainmarket of the place, and therebyensure the copious arrival of provision at the imperial camp. But this [peopling of the place] cannot be effected without abolishing the poll tox (jaziya) on the Hindu residents of the place. Please order that

Inayetullah Khan may send a letter patent (sanad) of exemption [from the jaziya]."

The Emperor wrote, "I do not accept helpers from among the infidels. Your wish for the colonising of the grain market at the tomb, and your upsetting the command contained in the text of the holy Quran concerning jaziya,—which is '[Chastise them till they pay jaziya from the hand because] they are humbled', by substituting for it the words 'they deserve to be excused', —are a thousand stages remote from the perfect wisdom and obedience to the august Religious Law which are possessed by this trusted servant aware of my sentiments. Evidently, a group of your companions, — the habit of which party, more despicable than sweepers, is to create suspicion in the hearts of men, —have made you blind and go astray, and have, through immature greed, given to this worthless idea a place in your heart which is receptive of allurements. How can this old man, stricken in years and experienced in affairs [i.e., Aurangzib], be deceived? (Then he wrote a verse)

Go away! and set this trap for some other bird, As the nest of the Phœnix is built too high[49]."

As for grants to temple being given by Aurangzeb, following are the instances mentioned in his court records about the destruction of temples due to the 'tolerant' policies of this Mughal:

"On Thursday, the 8thApril, 1669/17th Zil. Q., occurred an eclipse; prayers were said and alms distributed, as was the custom.

The Lord Cherisher of the Faith learnt that in the provinces of Tatta, Multan and especially at Benares, the Brahman misbelievers used to teach their false books in their established schools, and that admirers and students bothHindu and Muslim, used to come from great distances to these misguided men in order to acquire this vile learning. His Majesty, eager to establish Islam, issued orders to the governors of all the provinces to *demolish the schools and temples of the infidels* and with the utmost

urgency put down the teaching and the public practice of the religion of these misbelievers[50].”

“On Thursday, the 13th May/22nd Zil. H.,… Salih Bahadur, macebearer, was sent to demolish the temple of Malarna[51].” “OnThursday, the 2nd September, 1669/15th Rabi. S., Mirza Mukarram Khan Safavi died of a severe fever. It was

[49] (Ahkam iAlamgiri, p. 109)

[50] (Sarkar, MaasiriAlamgiri, pp. 51-52)

Excerpt from
Maasiri Alamgiri

reported that, according to the Emperor’s command, his officers had demolished the temple ofViswanath at Kashi[52].” “THIRTEENTHYEAR OFTHE REIGN. (1080A.H.)
13th January, 1670 1st January, 1671.

On Thursday, 27th January/15th Ramzan, the justice loving Emperor ordered that complainants should not be excluded from the side of the window of darsan: the harem officers were to draw up their petitions by means of ropes and show them toHis Majesty. During this month ofRamzan abounding in miracles, the Emperor as the promoter of justice and overthrower of mischief, as a knower of truth and destroyer of oppression, as the zephyr of the garden of victory and the reviver of the faith of the Prophet, issued orders for the demolition of the temple situated in Mathura, famous as the Dehra of Kesho Rai. In a short time by the great exertions of his officers, the destruction of this strong foundation of infidelity was accomplished, and on its site a lofty mosque was built at the expenditure of a large sum.

This temple of folly was built by that gross idiot Birsingh Deo Bundela. Before his accession to the throne, the Emperor Jahangir was displeased with ShaikhAbul Fazl. This infidel became a royal favorite by slaying him, and after Jahangir’s accession was rewarded for this service with the permission to build the temple, which he did at an expense of thirtythree lakhs of rupees.

Praised be the august God of the faith of Islam, that in the auspicious reign of this destroyer of infidelityand turbulence, such a wonderful and seemingly impossible work was successfully accomplished. On seeing this instance of the

Excerpt from
Maasiri Alamgiri

strength of the Emperor's faith and the grandeur of his devotion to God, the proud Rajas were stifled, and in amazement they stood like images facing the wall. The idols, large and small, set with costly jewels, which had been set up in the temple, were brought toAgra, and buried under the steps of the mosque of the Begam Sahib, in order to be continuallytrodden upon. The name of Mathura was changed to Islamabad[53]."

"22NDYEAR OFTHE REIGN 1089A.D.
7th October, 1678 25th September, 1679
Darab Khan was sent with a strong force to chastise the Rajputs of Khandela and demolish the great temple of the place[54]."
"Darab Khan who had been sent with a strong force to punish the Rajputs of Khandela and to demolish the *great temple* of the place, attacked the place on the 8th March /5th Safar, and slew the three hundred and odd men who had made a bold defence, not one of them escaping alive. The temples of Khandela and Sanula and *all other temples* in the neighbourhood were demolished[55]."
"On Sunday, the 25thMay/24thRabi. S., KhanJahanBahadur came from Jodhpur, *after demolishing the temples* and bringing with himself some cart-loads of idols, and had audience of the Emperor, who highlypraised him and ordered that the idols, which were mostly jewelled, golden, silvery, bronze, copper or stone, should be cast in the yard (jilaukhanah) of the Court and under the steps of the Jam'a

[53] (Ibid p 60) [54] (Ibid p106)

Excerpt from
Maasiri Alamgiri

mosque, to be trodden on. They remained so for some time and at last their very names were lost.[56]"

"On the 4th January /12th Zil. H., the Emperor encamped in the pass. HasanAli Khan was sent in pursuit of the infidel. Prince Muhammad 'Azam and Khan Jahan Bahadur were permitted to view Udaipur. RuhullahKhan and Ekkataz Khan went to demolish the great temple in front of the Rana's palace, which was one of the rarest buildings of the age and the chief cause of the destruction of life and property of the despised worshippers. Twenty machator Rajputs were sitting in the temple vowed to give up their lives; first one of them came out to fight, killed some and was then himself slain, then came out another and so on, until every one of the twenty perished, after killing a large number of the imperialists including the trusted slave, Ikhlas. The temple was found empty. The *hewers broke the images*[57]."

"On Saturday, the 24th January, 1680 /2nd Muharram, the Emperor went to view lake Udaisagar, constructed by the Rana, and ordered *all the three temples* on its banks to be demolished… On the 29thJanuary/7th Muharram, Hasan 'Ali Khan brought to the Emperor twenty camel-loads of tents and other things captured from the Rana's palace and reported that *one hundred and seventy-two* other temples in the environs of Udaipur had been destroyed. The Khan received the title of Bahadur 'Alamgirshahi. On the 31st January/9th Muharram, Khan Jahan Bahadur was sent to Bhainsror (cor.), and presented with a robe, a jewelled dagger, and a horse with gold saz… On Monday, the 22nd February /1st Safar

[56] (ibid p108)

[57] (Ibid pp 114 - 115)

the Emperor went to view Chitor; by his order *sixty-three* temples of the place were destroyed[58]."

"Abu Turab, who had been sent to demolish the temples of Amber, returned to Court on Tuesday, the 10thAugust/24th Rajab, and reported that he had pulled down*sixty-six* temples. Khwaja Mu'atamad Khan, qiladar of Gwalior, died on Thursday, the 26thAugust /10th Shaban[59]."

"The old mosque was filled again and the new temple was destroyed[60]"

The number of temples destroyed which could be counted comes to 307. This does not include the number of temples entered as 'large numbers of temples' destroyed. The period of these demolitions is roughly forty last years of his life when he had ascended the throne and was all powerful. The idols from temples were carried through hundreds of kilometres to be thrown at the doorsteps of different mosques to be trodden upon by Muslims. Such naked barbarity and insensitivity is being wiped out from the collective history and a reverse image is being presented about this bigot.

Although NCERT authors project them as benevolent to 'Hindu, Jain, Zoroastrian, Christian and Jewish' faiths, the truth is that he did not even tolerate Muslims from different sects. His hatred for Shia Muslims was just a trifle less than that of other religions:

"Fierce as was Aurangzib[1]s hatred of the Hindus (the vast majority of his subjects), it was equalled by his aversion for the Shias— who supplied him with some of his best generals and all his ablest civil officers. To him the Shia was a heretic

[58] (Ibid pp 116 – 117)
[59] (Ibid pp 120)
[60] (Ibid pp 258)

(rafizi); in one of his letters he quotes with admiration the story of a Sunni who escaped to Turkey after murdering a Shia at Isfahan, and draws from it the moral, "Whoever acts for truth and speaks up for truth, is befriended by the True God!" In another letter he tells us how he liked the naming of a dagger as the 'Shia slayer' (Rafizi kush), and ordered some more of the same name to be made for him. In his correspondence he never mentions the Shias without an abusive epithet: 'corpse eating demons' (ghul i bayabani), 'misbelievers' (batil mazhaban) are among his favourite phrases. Indeed, even the highest Shia officers had such a bad time of it in his Court that they often played the hypocrite to please him!Aurangzib threw the

cloak of Sunni orthodoxy over his aggressive conquest of Bijapur and Golkonda, of which the rulers were Shias. The Chief Qazi Shaikh ul Islam (one of the purest characters of the age) tried to dissuade the Emperor from these "wars between Muslims" as opposed to Islam. But Aurangzib grew displeased at the opposition; the honest and manly Qazi resigned his post, left the Court, and for the rest of his life rejected the Emperor[1]s repeated solicitations to resume his high office[61]."

The truth is that Mughal rule was a refined form of banditry which NCERT authors eulogise in the entire curriculum. Jadunath Sarkar captures the true essence of this regime. To highlight this ugly face of the Mughals, he cites an example of the old king of Vijaynagar. During the reign of Shah Jahan, the king was so fed up of the Deccani Sultans that he was willing to accept a tributary status. How Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb conspired to extract maximum out of the situation is better understood in the words of Jadunath:

[61] (Ahkam iAlamgiri, p. 14)

Excerpt from
History of
Aurangzeb

"Sri Ranga Rayal, the last nominal king of the Vijaynagar line, saw his dominions slipping out ofhis grasp as the Bijapuris advanced conquering the Karnatak from the south and the Golkonda generals from the north. He lost Jinji to the former and Chandragiri to the latter, and was practically driven out of both the Arcot districts. As early as 1653 he had sent an agent named Rama Rao to Aurangzib to seek the Imperial protection against the Deccani Sultans.

But the Viceroy of the Deccan did not interfere, possibly because the Karnatak was too far off, and matters were not yet ripe for putting pressure on Golkonda. In the course of the next two years the Rajah was driven to extremities. In a short time he would be utterly dispossessed of his lands. He sent another confidential agent, a Brahman named Srinivas, to Aurangzib, desperately crying for the protection of his dominions onanyterms: he would deliver 2.5 krores of rupees, two hundred elephants,

and all his hoarded jewels, to the Emperor, he would promise anannual tribute, he would agree to his kingdom being annexed to the empire and then given back to him as a mere jagir. Nay more, "if Shah Jahan's grace should be reluctant to fall on him on account of his being a misbeliever," the Rajah promised to turn Muslim with all his relatives and dependents! Only he must be saved from the two Deccani Sultans; his territory should no longer be seized by them." The action taken on this petition throws a lurid light on the character of Mughal rule in India.

Aurangzib proposed to send an officer of his to the Karnatak to enquire into the Rajah's capacity to keep his profuse promises. Shah Jahan disallowed the deputation, but ordered Aurangzib, "after frightening the two Sultans of the Deccan, to get from them a good sum" as the price of refusing

Excerpt from
History of
Aurangzeb

protection to Sri Ranga. That is, the lion agreed to look on with indifference, if only the two wolves gave him a big slice of their prey. Hearing of these negotiations with the Mughal viceroy, the Bijapuri generals pressed their attack, captured the fort of Vellore, "the best in the Karnatak," and tried to seize the Rajah's elephants. The helpless Sri Ranga importuned the Mughals for help before all was over with him.

But Aurangzib played with the miserable Suppliant as an angler does with a fish. Outwardly he appointed one of his officers, Muhammad Mumin, togo tothe Karnatak, but wrote to Shah Jahan, "My real object in doing so is to secure a handsome present from Bijapur at this opportunity." Both the Deccani Sultans, he exultingly adds, "are alarmed at the appointment of Muhammad Mumin. We shall use this posting as a screw to get out of them what they looted from the Karnatak and kept concealed. Please do not write to the Bijapur king before this business (of exacting a present) is brought to completion." He had already instructed his envoy at Bijapur to give the Sultan to understand that if he offered a satisfactory present to the Emperor, Muhammad Mumin would be recalled, and Imperial help refused to the Rajah of the Karnatak.

Sri Ranga Rayal was thus left to his fate. Crushed between Bijapur and Golkonda, he lost his all and clung only to some petty estates which were too poor to tempt Muslim cupidity or too difficult of access to his aggressors. We hear of him again in 1657 and 1658 as trying to recover some ofhis former lands, when Aurangzib's attention was diverted from the Karnatak by the invasion of Bijapur and the War of Succession. His last appearance on the stage of history was about 1661, when he lent the prestige of his name to his vassal, The chief of Bednur, in a fruitless invasion of Mysore. Aurangzib's treatment of the Rajah of the Karnatak and his Cynical avowal of his utterly sordid motives throughout the transaction, has a deep political significance. To the historian whose eyes are not dazzled by the Peacock Throne, the Taj Mahal, and other examples of outward glitter, this episode (with many others of the same kind) proves that the Mughal empire was only a thinly veiled system of brigandage. It explains whythe Indianprinces, noless thanthe Indianpeople, so readily accepted England's suzerainty[62]."

It is evident from the above instances, and many others recorded in Mughal chronicles, and by foreign visitors, that Mughals neither considered themselves as Indians nor were secular or benevolent in their approach. But, against all this historical records readily available, NCERT wants students to believe their biased version to be true.

The only disclaimer

When Frenchman Bernier visited India from 1656 to 1668, during the reign ofAurangzeb, the oppressive hold of Sultans had changed to the iron grip of Mughals.

We have seen how in the NCERT books the most obscure, colonial, unscientific, fraudulent and concocted theories are peddled. They use the statements of Ramabai, Periyar and Jyoti Phule to establish discredited conjectures like Aryan Invasion Theory and not even once add a disclaimer, like 'their assessment might have been wrong'. But, in the context of Islamic rulers, a rare disclaimer appears. When Francois Bernier is introduced to the students, a sentence is inserted, which states:

[62] (History ofAurangzeb, pp. 248-251)

“In virtually every instance Bernier described what he saw in India as a bleak situation in comparison to the development in Europe. As we will see, this assessment was not always accurate.” NCERT, class 12th, p 122

So, the NCERT authors become apologists for Mughals. “This, then, is how Bernier saw the Mughal Empire – its king was the king of “beggars and barbarians”; its cities and towns were ruined and contaminated with “ill air”; and its fields, “overspread with bushes” and full of “pestilential marshes”. And, all this was because of one reason: crown ownership of land.
Curiously, none of the Mughal official documents suggest that the state was the sole owner of land. For instance, Abu’l Fazl, the sixteenth-century official chronicler of Akbar’s reign, describes the land revenue as “remunerations of sovereignty”, a claim made by the ruler on his subjects for the protection he provided rather than as rent on land that he owned.”

NCERT, class 12th, p 132

Suddenly, we find them as scholars endowed with critical thinking abilities. The eminent historians defend the Mughals by citing a chronicler tothe effect that the ‘benevolent’ Mughals did not consider themselves as the owners of the land, rather extorted money in the name of ‘remunerations of sovereignty’. But then what do we make of the claims of various Mughals that they had the right to gift away vast tracts of land at their whims and fancies.

Historical records bear testimonyto the fact that the Mughals treated land as their fiefs and distributed to their lickspittles and sycophants. We find Jahangir, the sonofAkbar, distributing jagirs tohis henchmen as if he was the owner of the land.
“As it was my desire that many of the Akbari and Jahangiri officers should obtain the fruition of their wishes, I informed the bakhshis that whoever wished to have his birthplace made into his jagir should make a representation to that effect, so that in accordance with the Chingiz canon

(tura) the estate might be conveyed to him by al tamgha and become his property, and he might be secured from apprehension of change. Our ancestors and forefathers were in the habit of granting jagirs to everyone under proprietarytitle, and adorned the farmans for these with the al tamgha seal, which is an impressed seal made in vermilion (i.e. red ink). I ordered that they should cover the place for the seal with gold-leaf (tilaposh) and impress the seal thereon, and I called this the altim tamgha[63]."

This is from the proverbial horse's mouth yet children are being fed with drivel that the Mughals were humility personified.

Iconoclasm

The audacity and duplicity with which the iconoclasm of Muslim kings is concealed can put brazen tricksters to shame. From Muhammad Qasim's first inroads in 712 to Tipu Sultan's death at the end of the ninteenth century, Hindu, Buddhist and Jain shrines were razed to ground. Such a consistent behavior, during a vast time period stretching beyond a thousand years and geographically distributed over the length and breadth of the country, is evidence that it is typical to these (muslim) rulers. But this aspect is skillfully suppressed.

In the present NCERT textbooks, this is achieved by using a fourstep approach. In the first step, such behaviour is presented in a manner that it appears less dastardly than it actually is. [63] (Tuzuki Jahangiri, p. 23)

"Because kings built temples to demonstrate their devotion to God and their power and wealth, it is not surprising that when they attacked one another's kingdoms, they often targeted these buildings." NCERT, class 7th, p 65

By assigning a reason other than religious motives, the heinousness of the act is reduced in this first step. The students are forced to believe that this action is not motivated by religious fanaticism but by something as mundane as greed for wealth.

History bears testimony that before the advent of Islam in India, ideological differences were resolved by intellectual discussions called ' kkl ~kFZ, in which both protagonists presented their points of view. There is no

historical evidence of someone razing a shrine or smashing an idol to prove superiorityof his belief system. In contrast, IslamizedArabs, Turks and Persians adopted the trend of breaking idols and shrines as practised in other Abrahamic creeds. When prophet Muhammad and his followers from Medina overwhelmed Mecca, Kaaba was house to 360 idols. He entered the Kaaba and ordered all the idols be broken down. This victory of Muslims over Mecca upgraded the status of Muhammad as an undisputed chief in the region. Relishing this power, Muhammad sent special "armed parties to destroy the idolatrous shrines in the vicinity, and secure the submission of the surrounding tribes[64]." Muhammad sent his son-in-law Ali on expeditions especially aimed at destruction of temples and idols.

"Alywas sent, in command of two hundred horses, to destroy the temple of the Beni Tay, a tribe divided between the profession of Idolatry and the Christian faith. He performed his mission effectually, and returned laden with plunder and with many prisoners[65]."

[64] (The Life of Mahomet, p. 399)
[65] (Ibid p 422)

The authors of NCERT books present a version of history in which the motive of destruction of temples is depicted as wealth. "As we will see (pp. 62-66), rulers also tried to demonstrate
their power and resources bybuilding large temples. So, when they attacked one another's kingdoms, they often chose to target temples, which were sometimes extremely rich. You will read more about this in Chapter 5. One of the best known of such rulers is Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni,Afghanistan. He ruled from 997 to 1030, and extended control over parts of Central Asia, Iran and the north-western part of the subcontinent. He raided the subcontinent almost every year – his targets were wealthytemples, including that of Somnath, Gujarat."
NCERT, class 7th, p 21

Since the NCERT authors are claiming that the attack on Somnath was for its wealth, it is better to read what the Muslim chroniclers themselves say about his act:

“It is said that the temple of Somnat was built by one of the greatest Rajas of India. The idol was cut out of solid stone, about five yards in height, of which two were buried in the earth. Mahmud, as soon as his eye fell on this idol, lifted up his battle-axe with much anger, and struck it with such force that the idol broke into pieces. The fragments of it were ordered to be taken to Ghazni, and were cast down at the threshold of the Jami’ Masjid, where they are lying to this day. It is a well-authenticated fact that when Mahmud was about to destroy the idol, a crowd of Brahmans represented (to his nobles) that if he would desist from the mutilation they would pay several crores of gold coins into his treasury. This was agreed to by many of the nobles, who pointed out to the Sultan that he could not obtain so much treasure by breaking the image, and that the proffered money would be very serviceable. Mahmud replied, “I know this, but I desire that on the day of resurrection I should be summoned with the words, ‘Where is that Mahmud (cqr f' kdu) who broke the greatest of the heathen idols?’ rather than by these: ‘Where is that Mahmud (cqr Qjk' k) who sold the greatest of the idols to the infidels for gold?’[66]"

Second step is to create an impression that kings used to destroy shrines in order to display their might. Thus, in this step, the reason of iconoclasm is diverted from religious bigotry to a ‘display of power’.

“In the political culture of the Middle Ages most rulers displayed their politicalmight and militarysuccess byattacking and looting the places of worship of defeated rulers.”

NCERT, class 7th, p 66 The third step is to pretend that kings belonging to *all* religious persuasions used to perpetrate such deeds.

The fourth step is to attribute such deeds to the thinking of an individual Muslim, instead of Islamic sanction. The successful accomplishment of this

feat is achieved by using the techniques of propaganda. The extract below is an example in which 3rd and 4th steps are used in combination:

"In the early ninth century when the Pandyan king Shrimara Shrivallabha invaded Sri Lanka and defeated the king, Sena I (831-851), the Buddhist monk and chronicler Dhammakitti noted: "he removed all the valuables ... The statue of the Buddha made entirely of gold in the Jewel Palace ... and the golden images in the various monasteries – all these he seized." The blow to the pride of the Sinhalese ruler had to

[66] (TarikheAlfi: Elliot and Dowson, vol. 2, pp 471-472)

be avenged and the next Sinhalese ruler, Sena II, ordered his general to invade Madurai, the capital of the Pandyas. The Buddhist chronicler noted that the expedition made a special effort to find and restore the gold statue of the Buddha.

Similarly in the early eleventh century, when the Chola king Rajendra I built a Shiva temple in his capital he filled it with prized statues seized from defeated rulers. An incomplete list included: a Sun-pedestal from the Chalukyas, a Ganesha statue and several statues of Durga; a Nandi statue from the eastern Chalukyas; an image of Bhairava (a form of Shiva) and Bhairavi from the Kalingas of Orissa; and a Kali statue from the Palas of Bengal.

Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni was a contemporary of Rajendra I. During his campaigns in the subcontinent he also attacked the temples of defeated kings and looted their wealth and idols. Sultan Mahmud was not a very important ruler at that time. But by destroying temples – especially the one at Somnath – he tried to win credit as a great hero of Islam."

NCERT, class 7th, p 66

Notice that in the first two paragraphs, an image is created of a rift among two Indic traditions, Hindus and Buddhists.Also notice that there is not a single evidence of any temples being 'destroyed'. Another factor, which gullible students might miss, is that the idols taken from different temples

were installed with the reverential treatment. In the third paragraph, the iconoclasm of Mahmud Ghaznavi is sneaked in to equate the demolition of temples with the benign actions of the previous two cases.

Mahmud Ghaznavi has left behind elaborate details of his gory expeditions. According to his own memoirs, he had come to wage Jihad on Hindus of India.

"When the SultanYaminu-d Daula Mahmud bin Subuktigin went to wage religious war against India, he made great efforts to capture and destroy Somnat, in the hope that the Hindus would then become Muhammadans. He arrived there in the middle of Zi-l k'ada, 416 a.h. (December, 1025 a.d.). The Indians made a desperate resistance. They would go weeping and crying for help into the temple, and then issue forth to battle and fight till all were killed. The number of the slain exceeded 50,000[67]."

Battle of Waihind

"Thus did the infidels meet with the punishment and loss due to their deserts? The standards of the Sultan then returned happy and victorious to Ghazni, the face of Islam was made resplendent by his exertions, the teeth of the true faith displayed themselves in their laughter, the breasts of religion expanded, and the back of idolatry was broken[68]."

Attack on Sindh

"After this victory over Ilak Khan, the Sultan resolved upon going to Hind for the purpose of making a sudden attack upon the person known as Nawasa Shah, one of the rulers of Hind, who had been established as governor over some of the territories in that country conquered by the Sultan, for the purpose of protecting their borders. Satan had got the better of Nawasa Shah, for he was again apostatizing towards the pit of plural worship, had thrown off the slough of Islam, and held conversation with the chiefs of idolatry respecting the casting off the firm rope of religion from his neck[69]."

[67] (Kazwini, 1871, p. 98)

[68] (Ibid p 28)

[69] (Ibid pp 32 – 33)

Capture of Narain

“The Sultan again resolved on an expedition to Hind, and marched towards Narain, urging his horses and moving over ground, hard and soft, until he came to the middle of Hind, where he reduced chiefs, who, up to that time obeyed no master, overturned their idols, put to the sword the vagabonds of that country, and with delayand circumspection proceeded to accomplish his design[70].”

Raid on Narain

“After the Sultan had purified Hind from idolatry, and raised mosques therein, he determined to invade the capital of Hind, to punish those who kept idols and would not acknowledge the unity of God. He collected his warriors and distributed money amongst them[71].”

Raid on Thanesar

“The chief of Tanesar was on this account obstinate in his infidelity and denial of God. So the Sultan marched against him with his valiant warriors, for the purpose of planting the standards of Islam and extirpating idolatry[72].”

“The blood of the infidels flowed so copiously, that the stream was discoloured, notwithstanding its purity, and people were unable to drink it. Had not night come on and concealed the traces of their flight, many more of the enemy would have been slain. The victory was gained by God’s grace, who has established Islam for ever as the best of religions, notwithstanding that idolaters revolt against it. The Sultan returned with plunder which it is impossible torecount. Praise

[70] (Ibid p 36)

be to God, the protector of the world, for the honour he bestows upon Islam and Musulmans[73].”

Capture of Mathura

“The idols of silver amounted to two hundred, but they could not be weighed without breaking them to pieces and putting them into scales. The

Sultan gave orders that all the temples should be burnt with naphtha and fire, and leveled with the ground[74]."

The above literary evidence should be sufficient to give an idea about the extent of carnage and iconoclasm perpetrated byMahmud Ghaznavi, which is totally obliterated from the knowledge pool of the general population of our nation. Yet this is just a small sample of the barbaric practices of the invaders.

The book 'Hindu Temples: What happened to them'published by Voice of India in two volumes gives a list of thousands of Hindu temples destroyed by Islamic rulers on the basis of literary, epigraphical and archeological evidence.

The brigandage and iconoclasm ofArabs, Ghaznavids, Turks and Mughals is unparalleled in human history. On the other hand, King Rajendra, who is being clubbed with Ghaznavi, was a lover of architecture. He was responsible for innovative use of hydraulic engineering in irrigation and also for building magnificent temples in South India. The NCERT authors, in their wickedness, tarnish the name of this benevolent king by associating him with Mahmud. To drive home their point, the NCERT authors have used another insidious trick — after writing such passages, they pose loaded questions to the students. Following the above passage, the question posed as a teaser is:
"In what ways do you think the policies of Rajendra I and Mahmud of Ghazni were a product of their times?"

NCERT, class 7th, p 66

The intent is clear – at the cost of historical facts, hide the grisly and unethicalconduct of Mahmud and other Islamic rulers.Aconduct which was based on Islamic theology; and instead blame it on the medieval mindset.

Lampooning Hindu Kings
While glorifying Muslim invaders, the NCERT authors lampoon Hindu

kings, presenting them as megalomaniacs who considered themselves ‘similar to God’.

“Temples and mosques were beautifullyconstructed because they were places of worship. They were also meant to demonstrate the power, wealth and devotion of the patron. Take the example of the Rajarajeshvara temple.An inscription mentions that it was built byKing Rajarajadeva for the worship of his god, Rajarajeshvaram. Notice how the name of the ruler and the god are very similar. The king took the god’s name because it was auspicious and he wanted to appear like a god. Through the rituals of worship in the temple one god (Rajarajadeva) honoured another (Rajarajeshvaram). The largest temples were all constructed by kings.

The other, lesser deities in the temple were gods and goddesses of the allies and subordinates of the ruler. The temple was a miniature model of the world ruled by the king and his allies. As they worshipped their deities together in the royal temples, it seemed as if they brought the just rule of the gods on earth.”
In stark contrast, Muslim Sultans and Padshahs are shown as humble whohad no such pompous pretensions but their chroniclers projected them as “shadow of God”.

“Muslim Sultans and Padshahs did not claim tobe incarnations of god but Persian court chronicles described the Sultan as the “Shadow of God”. An inscription in the Delhi mosque explained that God choseAlauddin as a king because he had the qualities of Moses and Solomon, the great law-givers of the past. The greatest law-giver and architect was God Himself. He created the world out of chaos and introduced order and symmetry.”

NCERT, class 7th, pp 63 – 64

The NCERT authors don’t bother to explain that the ‘Sultans and Padshahs’ had a very strong reason for which they did not claim to be incarnations of god. The root of this reason lies in the peculiar nature of the Islamic creed. According to the tenets of Islamic dogma, claiming to be god or a reincarnation of god is the worst sin. It is called ‘shirk’ and is considered

blasphemous. Anyone adventurous enough to make such a proclamation invites death. This is in direct contrast with the Upanishadic teachings of 'Aham Brahamasmi'.

The Hindu cosmology is comfortable with the thought of someone proclaiming to be god as according to Hindu worldview, Brahm (czã) pervades the entire cosmos therefore god is present in all humans. This is antithetical to the IslamicAllah who resides outside the cosmos and no one else has the capacity to attain a state equivalent toAllah. Such proclamations invite severe punishment in Islamic jurisprudence, including death. SultanFiroz Tughlaq presents one such example in his memoirs. "A person who was one of the pupils of 'Ain Mahru, had set himself up as a shaikh in the country of Gujarat, and having got together a body of disciples, used to say, "Ana-l Hakk" (I am God). He commanded his disciples that when he used these words theywere to say, "Thou art, thou art!" He further said," I am the king who dies not;" and he wrote a book in which he inserted the words of his profession (kalamat). He was put in chains and brought before me. The charge being proved, I condemned him to punishment, and his book I ordered to be burnt, so that his innovation (fasad) might be prevented from spreading among the faithful people of Islam[75]."

Thus, the Sultans and Padshahs did not claim to be 'god' or 'incarnation of god', out of any lack of vanity or megalomania, but due to their instinct of self-preservation. Thus, they had to satisfy their egos by using honorifics like Shah Jahan,Akbar, Jahangir, etc. It was not only rulers who had to contend with less glorious titles, the Ulama and Sufis also faced this problem. Historian Sita Ram Goelhighlights this dilemma when he explains the character of Sufis:

"Quite a few of them confided to their close disciples that they had also received revelations which compared quite favourably with those contained in the Quran. Some of them were convinced that they too were prophets in their own right, but could not publicize the secret for fear of being beheaded by a sultan, or getting killed by a Muslim mob instigated by rival claimants.

So they ended by decorating themselves with slightlyless loftytitles *walî* (friend ofAllah), *ghaus* (axis), *qutb* (guide), *qayyûm* (stabilizer), *mujaddid*

[75] (Futuhati Firoz Shahi, pp. 379-380)
(renewer), *Mahdi* (the great leader who appears on the Last Day), *abdãl, autãd, nuqta, akhyãr*, and the rest[76]."

One more trick used to present Muslim kings in a positive light is to show them as benevolent rulers. This is done at the expense of ancient kings.

"It was widely believed that the rule of a just king would be an age of plenty when the heavens would not withhold rain. At the same time, making precious water available by constructing tanks and reservoirs was highly praised. Sultan Iltutmish won universal respect for constructing a large reservoir just outside Dehli-i kuhna. It was called the hauz-i Sultani or the "King's Reservoir"."

NCERT, class 7th, p 65

Reading these textbooks, the students will get an impression as if the act of constructing large reservoirs was a novel phenomenon which came as a surprise for the populace of India. The population was so elated that the king won 'universal respect'.

The fact is that India has been an agrarian country since millennia and there was nothing new or unique in constructing a 'reservoir'. One of the duties of kings was to take care of needs of the population, especially related to irrigation. The significance of this aspect can be understood from the fact that it is mentioned in books like Mahabharat and Arthshastra. These books predate the favorite creeds of the NCERT authors. In the Sabha Parv of Mahabharat the Sage Naarad asks Yudhishthir:

"Have large ponds, full of water, been constructed in all parts of your kingdom? Have you ensured that the agriculture is not dependent only on rainwater[77]?"

[76] (Goel, Muslim Separatism: Causes and Consequences) [77] (Mahabharat, vol. 1, p. 782)

In Kautilya's Arthshastra, constructions of tanks and its taxation system is described in detail:

"In the case of construction of new works, such as tanks, lakes, etc., taxes (on the lands below such tanks) shall be remitted for five years (panchavárshikah parihárah). For repairing neglected or ruined works of similar nature, taxes shall be remitted for four years. For improving or extending water-works, taxes shall be remitted for three years. In the case of acquiring such newly started works by mortgage or purchase, taxes on the lands below such works shall be remitted for two years. If uncultivated tracts are acquired (for cultivation) by mortgage, purchase or in any other way, remission of taxes shall be for two years. Out of crops grown by irrigation by means of wind power or bullocks (vátapravartim anandinibandháyatana) or below tanks, in fields, parks, flower gardens, or in any other way, so much of the produce as would not entail hardship on the cultivators may be given to the Government. Persons who cultivate the lands below tanks, etc., of others at a stipulated price (prakraya), or for annual rent (avakraya), or for certain number of shares of the crops grown (bhága) or persons who are permitted to enjoy such lands free of rent of anykind, shall keep the tanks, etc. in good repair; otherwise they shall be punished with a fine of double the loss. Persons, letting out the water of tanks, etc., at any other place than their sluice gate (apáre), shall pay a fine of 6 panas; and persons who recklessly obstruct the flow of water from the sluice-gate of tanks shall also pay the same fine[78]."

[78] (Kautilya's Arthshastra, pp. 244-245)

This tells us about the sophistication that was achieved in irrigation technology at the time of Kautilya. TM Srinivasan gives instances in which this technique of water transfer from one tank to another was used:

"TheViranarayan eri orViranam tank (first half of 10thcentury A.D.) is at the fag-end of the Kaveri delta near Kattumannar Koil (South Arcot district) and eight miles west of Gangaikondasolapuram (Tiruchirapalli district). The Band of extant reservoir alone is 10 miles in length and has a mean width of three miles. The circumference of the tank when it is full is nearly 25 miles" (Gaad 1906 p. 132). The surplus water of famous 'Colaganam' tank (now in ruined condition) constructed by the Cola king Rajendra I in 1012 to 1014 A.D. at Gangaikonda Solapuram went to make up this tank through a canal. Another interesting instance comes from Karnataka. A Kannad inscription (IA VI no. 32, pp 138 ff) dated 1096-97A.D. from Kattageri (Badami Taluk, Katadgi district) refers to the existence of a 'Larger big tank' during the rule of the Western Calukyan ruler Vikramaditya VI. J.F. fleet, who identified the place and the tank based on the inscription, attributes three reasons for the sustained supply of water in that area after in situ inspection of the place. "The system of tanks at Kattageri was formerly a large one. First, there is a small tank, on the west of the fort, and close under the walls… Secondly, there is a large tank, on a slightly higher level, which, if repaired, would, when full, including the proceeding in itself, formed by an embankment running to the south from just below the south east corner of the fort. And thirdly, about ¼ of a mile away to the south east of the proceeding, and on a lower level, there are the remains of a large embankment, now breached and quite useless, which when in repair, evidentlyformed a tank of considerable area". From the above description it is discernable that the method of draining surplus water from the tank at the higher level to the tank at the lower level must have been successfully applied in this case. These two instances prove that the ancients had a sound knowledge of hydraulic engineering while planning and executing the irrigation works[79]."

Notice that the NCERT authors tried to compare Rajendra Chola I, who was instrumental in construction of tanks, with bigot Mahmud Ghaznavi for iconoclasm, but when it comes to positive aspects, even as mundane as "construction of a tank", only Iltutmish is praised sky high.

Shivaji: a mere chieftain?

Where the negative association of Indic kings is not possible, the NCERT

under-rates their achievements to undermine their historical stature.
A perfect example of this strategy is the treatment meted out to Shivaji, the founder of Maratha Empire. He holds a special place in the hearts of majorityof Indians. His sagacity, perseverance, tenacity, military skills and justice have made him a legend. Perhaps, this is the reason that NCERT reduces this formidable king to the status of a chieftain.

"Several villages were governed by a chieftain. Together they were only one small unit of a state…Campaigns against the *Maratha chieftain Shivaji* were initially successful. But Aurangzeb insulted Shivaji who escaped fromAgra, declared himself an independent king and resumed his campaigns against the Mughals."

NCERT, class 7th, pp 8, 49 [79] (History of Technology in India, Vol. 1, p. 566)

The choice of words is to deliberately downplay his stellar role in rejuvenating the Indic society. It would be better to look at the historical records whether he was founder of an empire or just a glorified 'chieftain'.

"At the time of his death Shivaji's kingdom included all the country (except the Portuguese possessions) stretching from Ramnagar (modern Dharampur State in the Surat Agency) in the north, to Karwar or the Gangavati river in the Bombay district of Kanara, in the south. The eastern boundary embraced Baglana in the north, then ran southwards along an irregular shifting line through the middle of the Nasik and Puna districts, and encircled the whole of the Satara and much of the Kolhapur districts. This tract formed what the Marathi documents describe as his swaraj or 'own kingdom' and the Persian accounts as his 'old dominions.' Here his ownership was recognised as legallyestablished and beyond question.Arecent but permanent acquisition was the Western Karnatak or the Kanarese-speaking country extending from Belgaum to the bank of the Tungabhadra opposite the Bellary district of the Madras Presidency[80]."

The message of these textbooks to the country is that Hindus do not have any hero to look up to, whereas the Sultans and Mughals have lifted this 'sub-continent' from a morass of idolatry and caste conflict.

The following table highlights the differential treatment meted out to kings belonging to different religious persuasions. While kings following autochthonous traditions are depicted as afflicted with various evils, those belonging to Islamic traditions are eulogised as ideal rulers by sanitising their demonic misdeeds.

[80] (Shivaji and His times, p. 405)

Hiding the real Tipu Sultan

In terms of longevity of his tenure or the extent of geographical area under his control, Tipu Sultan pales in comparison toAurangzeb but in bigotryand tyranny, he was not wanting. But the Tipu depicted by NCERT authors seems to be a very admirable figure. Before unravelling the real Tipu, let us look at the manner in which he is projected to the gullible students.

Tipu sultan – The Tiger of Mysore NCERT, class 8th, p 16 The legend of Tipu NCERT, class 8th, p 17 The sword of Tipu Sultan and Wootz steel NCERT, class 8th, p 97 Tipu sultan of Mysore, as you know, was one of the most powerful enemies of the British.

NCERT, class 8th, p 129 For a 13-14 year old student, these phrases are more than sufficient

to create an impression that Tipu was some kind of a super-human, a patriot, a progressive and revolutionary. However, in reality, he was just a reincarnated version of Aurangzeb or Muhammad Tughlaq. Fired with a Jihadi zeal, he intended to convert India into an Islamic country. For this purpose, he issued special orders to his subbordinates. The contents of this *farman* are as:

In the time of the seal [or last] of the Prophets (with whom be the blessing and peace of God) the divine commands were promulgated. Since then, owing to the decline of the true faith under the succeeding princes, they have ceased to be promulged : we, therefore, with the help of Almighty God, now issue the aforesaid commands; and, accordingly, the *Excerpt* above

mentioned commands are enclosed, herewith, under *from*
Farman our seal and signature, to serve as a guide to the true faith.

of Tipu

Sultan You are, in the best [possible] manner to explain the same to all the people of Islam, to the Kazy, and to the other superiors of your Kuchurry [or department], considering the communication thereof to the ignorant as one of the most incumbent and obligatory duties of religion: for such is the recompense of holy war.

You must cause numerous copies of the commands herewith sent to be made, and must distribute the same among the people of the faith, the Kazies and others belonging to your department, to the end that they may obtain the utmost publicity.

Proclamation, or Manifesto, of Tippoo Sultan
"Whereas, in conformity with the commands of God and the Prophet" [which say],

"Fight with those who do not believe in God, and in the last day; and who do not consider those things as unlawful, which God and his Prophet have prohibited, and profess not the true religion; and [fight] with those, unto whom the scriptures have been given, until they pay tribute by right of subjection, and be reduced low.

It is our constant object and sincere intention, that those worthless and stiff-necked infidels, who have turned aside their heads from obedience to the true believers, and openly raised the standards of infidelity, should be chastised by the hands of the faithful, and made either to acknowledge the true religion, or to pay tribute: particularly at this time, when, owing to the imbecility of the princes of Hind, that insolent *Excerpt* race having conceived the futile opinion, that the true believers *from*
Farman are become weak, mean, and contemptible; and not satisfied *of Tipu* even with this, but, preparing for war, have over-run and laid *Sultan* waste the "territories of the Moslems, and extended the hand

of violence and injustice on" the property and honour of the faithful.

"[Wherefore] we, trusting to the divine power and aid, and supported by our holy religion [according to the passage] – "Oh true believers, shall I show you a merchandize, which will deliver you from a painful torment [hereafter] ?

"Believe inGod and hisApostle, and defend God's true religion with your substance and in your persons. This will be better for you, if you knew it. He will forgive you your sins, and introduce you into gardens, through which rivers flow, and agreeable habitations in places of perpetual abode. This [will be] great felicity; and ye shall obtain other things which you desire, [namely] assistance from God and a speedy victory."

. . . . "having come to the resolution of prosecuting a holy war [against them],- deem it expedient [agreeablyto the text],

"Command them to do that which is lawful [proper], and prohibit their doing that which is unlawful; and observe the ordinances of God.'

to make known what is the pure Mahommedan law, to all and everyclass of Musulmans, both far and near, and thereby to extract the cotton of negligence from the ears of their understanding: and more especially those persons who, unmindful of the meaning of the sacred text, do not obey the unbelievers and hypocrites, for certainly God is omniscient and all-wise.'

Excerpt . . . . " have yielded obedience to the infidels, and engaged in *from* the service of those miserable tribes. It is therefore written *Farman of Tipu* to all those who reside in the dominions of the infidels, "They *Sultan* seek to deceive God and those who do believe; but they

deceive themselves only, and are not sensible thereof. There is an infirmity in their hearts. May God increase . . . their infirmity! They shall suffer a grievous punishment because they have been guilty of falsehood…

and to whose situation the [above] verse maybe justlyapplied, that considering it to be their indispensable duty to quit the territories of the

unbelievers, theyshould repair, with confident hearts and assured minds, to these parts where, by the Divine blessing, they shall be still better provided for than they " are at present, and their lives, honor, and property, remain under the protection of God; while such as are without the means of subsistence there, shall have a suitable allowance made to them here.

"We have accordingly issued preemptory orders throughout our dominions to this effect :

Receive into your protection all persons seeking refuge [in our territories] and report to the Presence the particulars of their situation, in order that, if it please God the Aider, due provision may be made for them.'

Whosoever shall refuse to give ear to these words, or shall contravene their promulgation, shallbe considered as destitute of [every particle of] honor [or zeal], as a stranger to [or no participator in] the bliss derived from [a steady] faith, " and as deserving to be banished from the presence of God, to be excluded from the circle of the faithful, and to be accounted as one of the accursed infidels[81].

[81] (Kirakpatrick pp 291-295)

The above *farman* can give an outline of the theory on which Tipu intended to build his rule. Had it been just a theory, it would have been tolerable. His acts were far more cruel.AEuropean professor from Rome had been in India during 1776-1789. He had witnessed the horrors perpetrated by Tipu and recorded them copiously. He narrates the atrocities perpetrated by Tipu on Brahmans:

In the years 1788 and 1789, when the cruel Tippoo Sultan Bahader, son of HayderAly Khan, persecuted the Brahmans, and caused them either to be unmercifully beat, or circumcised according to the Mohametan manner, a great many of them fled to Vaikatta, where they received every kind of protection possible from the king of Travancor[82].

The Roman professor further tells about the damage inflicted on Hindu learning by the cruelty of Tipu.

Farther towards the north, and at the distance of about ten leagues from Cranganor lies Trichur, a town and district: belonging to the Brahmans. They have here a celebrated academy, public and private schools; also an university, where young persons are instructed in their sciences, and the principles of their religion. This place was also destroyed by Tippoo Sultan; but rebuilt by the Brahmans, after Tippoo's defeat.All these cities, towns and churches, are situated under the latitude of 10° north[83].

Tipu Sultan had given explicit orders to torture and kill every nonMuslim that his army could lay hands on.
Hayder Aly's son, Tippoo Sultan Bahader, was at length fo incensed against the inhabitants of Calicut and the

[82] (Bartolomeo pp 122-123)

Excerpt from
Bartolomeo

neighbouring district, because theyassisted, byeverypossible means, their former sovereign, that he resolved to punish them; and for that purpose took the field in person. He was preceded by 30,000 barbarians, who butchered everyperson who came in their way; and by his heavy cannon under the command of general Lally, at the head of a regiment of artillery.

Then followed Tippoo Sultan himself, riding on an elephant; and behind him marched another corps, consisting of 30,000
-men also. The manner in which he behaved to the inhabitants of Calicut was horrid.

A great part of them, both male and female, were hung. He first tied up the mothers, and then suspended the children from their necks. The cruel tyrant caused several Christians and Heathens to be brought out naked, and made fast, to the feet of his elephants, which were then obliged to drag them about till their limbs fell in pieces from their bodies. At the same time he ordered all the churches and temples to be burned and pulled down or destroyed in some other manner. Christian and Pagan women were compelled to marry Mahometans; Mahometan women were compelled to

marry Heathens and Christians. The Pagans were deprived of the token of their nobility, which is a lock of hair called Cudumi; and every Christian who appeared in the streets, must either submit to be circumcised, or be hanged on the spot.

This happened in the year 1789, at which time I resided at Verapole..I had then an opportunityof conversing with several Christians and Pagans, who had escaped from the fury of this merciless tyrant; and I assisted these fugitives to procure a boat to enable them to cross the river which runs past that city[84].

When the child opens history book of ninth class, the first chapter deals with French revolution. He has been brainwashed through class eighth book into believing that Tipu was a great personality. Now he is taught that he was an enlightened ruler endowed with noble thoughts like 'liberty', 'democratic rights', 'abolition of feudal system' and 'freedom form bondage'.

The ideas of liberty and democratic rights were the most important legacy of the French Revolution. These spread from France to the rest of Europe during the nineteenth century, where feudal systems were abolished. Colonised peoples reworked the idea of freedom from bondage into their movements to create a sovereign nation state. Tipu Sultan and Rammohan Roy are two examples of individuals who responded tothe ideas coming from revolutionaryFrance.

NCERT, class 9th, pp23-24

This is being written about a person who had no qualms in inviting foreign forces to invade our country. He offered a partition of country between himself and French in case of a victory. The following is an excerpt from his letter written to the French Directory.

The English, jealous of the connection and friendship which for a long time reigned between my Sirkar and France, have united themselves to the Mahrattas, to the Nizam Ali Khan, and to my other enemies, for the purpose

of declaring war against me; a war as odious and unjust as that which had lasted for some years before, and which was attended with such fatal consequences to me, by taking from me my finest provinces, three crores, and thirty lacks of rupees. The Republic is not ignorant of any of these unfortunate circumstances; and of my having endeavoured to dispute every inch of territory, which I was forced to give up to our common enemy. I should not have been compelled to make those cruel sacrifices…All the conquests made from the enemy shall, with the exception of the Provinces which the King has been obliged to cede to the English, to the Maharattas, and to Nizam Ali Khan, be equally divided between the two nations, and according to the respective Conventions, the same divisionshall take place of the enemy's vessels and the Portuguese Colonies, for the purpose of indemnifying the King for the expenses of the war[85].

This letter reached the Executive Directory when they were more involved in their domestic strife therefore Tipu did not receive any favorable response to his treacherous offer. But, this letter tells us that Tipu did not have any patriotic feelings when he took battlefield against British forces.

Maligning and omitting the contribution of Indic kings, and sanitising the bloody history of kings belonging to foreign creeds fits perfectly with the over-allplot of the NCERTauthors.Anything and everything autochthonous is to be denigrated, children must be filled with revulsion for their own past.

[85] (Crichton, 1819, pp 126-129)

CHAPTER 6 Indic Traditions Oppress Women

The NCERT's message for students is – Indic civilization is and has always been misogynist, whereas alien creeds stand for man-woman equality.

N
CERT authors reduce historytextbooks to merelypropaganda material, to be fed to the nation's children throughthe schooling system, which leaves no room to challenge the lies they peddle.

Following one of the central techniques of a propagandist, ad nauseum, they tirelessly repeat a lie till the impressionable and unsuspecting victims start to perceive it as truth.

One of the lies is the idea that the ancient Indian society was highly misogynistic; women exploitation and discrimination was the norm rather than anexception; and this women subjugationwas sanctioned bythe Indic scriptures and perpetrated under Brahmans' leadership. The propaganda isn't limited to this. Like in all other issues, NCERT authors' underlying message of an exploitative Indic traditions and egalitarian Islam and Christianity, is nauseatingly repeated even in respect to gender issues, woman identity and her place in society.

In the textbook of class 6th, children are forced to repeatedly read that women and Shudras were subjected to exclusion and discrimination by 'Brahmans'or 'priests'since Vedic times.

"However, some people, such as those who were regarded as *Shudras* by the priests, were excluded from manyrituals." NCERT, class 6th, p 55 "Often, women were also grouped with the Shudras. Both women and Shudras were not allowed to study the Vedas." NCERT, class 6th, p 56 "However, women, dasas and kammakaras could not participate in these assemblies."

NCERT, class 6th, p 61

“Generally, women were not allowed to study the Vedas, and they had to follow the ashramas chosen by their husbands.” NCERT, class 6th, p 72 “The Puranas were written in simple Sanskrit verse, and were meant to be heard by everybody, including women and shudras, who were not allowed to study the Vedas.”

NCERT, class 6th, p 128

“Historians who have tried to understand these developments suggest that there were at least two processes at work. One was a process of disseminating Brahmanical ideas. This is exemplified by the composition, compilation and preservation of Puranic texts in simple Sanskrit verse, explicitly meant to be accessible to women and Shudras, who were generally excluded from Vedic learning.”

NCERT, class 12th, p 143

“Generally, they were written in simple Sanskrit verse, and were meant to be read aloud to everybody, including women and Shudras, who did not have access to Vedic learning.”

NCERT, class 12th, p 105

In addition to negatively indoctrinating students against the Indic traditions, NCERTauthors put it incontrast withAbrahamic religions, which, mischievously, are shown to be egalitarian and just. Indoctrination goes thus: —

“Here are a few verses from the Bible, the holy book that contains the teachings of Christ:
Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, For they shall be filled.

Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called sons of God.”

NCERT, class 6th, p 109 Similarly, one verse cherrypicked from Qur'anis also quoted:

"Around 1400 years ago, Prophet Muhammad introduced a new religion, Islam, inArabia. Like Christianity, Islam was a religion that laid stress on the equality and unity of all before Allah, the one supreme god. Here is a verse from the Quran, the sacred book of Islam:
For Muslim men and women, for believing men and women, for devout men and women, for true men and women, for men and women who are patient and constant, for men and women who humble themselves, for men and women who give in charity, for men and women who fast, for men and women who guard their chastity, and for men and women who engage much inAllah's remembrance, for them Allah has prepared forgiveness and great reward."

NCERT, class 6th, p 120

Imagine a child, twelve years of age, initially bombarded with communication regarding one set ofscriptures being fullof misogyny and then immediately followed by another set that appears to be full of compassion and egalitarianism. He is bound to be influenced by this biased representation, which he will carry throughout his life.

Indic ethos and women
The playof words byNCERT is used to subtlyunderplaythe sterling role that women seers played in compilation of Vedas.Although not a single word of Christian Bible or Qur'an has been contributed by women, there are at least thirty women seers, like Maitreyi, Shachi Paulomi and Gargi, who have contributed to the compilation of the Vedas – a unique feature in itself. But, the NCERT authors have chosen to underplay this significant aspect.

"These hymns were composed by sages (rishis). Priests taught students to recite and memorise each syllable, word, and sentence, bit by bit, with great care. Most of the hymns were composed, taught and learnt by men. A few were composed by women."

NCERT, class 6th, p 43

Similarly, many women participated in the creation of Upanishads, but, NCERT authors deliberatelychoose to present facts to underplay this uniqueness of Indian society. Even when theygrudginglyaccept that women participated, it is always followed up by some disparaging comment tokeep onrubbing inthat societyand its people were of discriminatory outlook.

“Most Upanishadic thinkers were men, especially Brahmins and rajas. Occasionally, there is mention of women thinkers, such as Gargi, who was famous for her learning, and participated in debates held in royal courts. Poor people rarely took part in these discussions.”

NCERT, class 6th, p 68

Among the scriptures of the three major religions, only Vedic literature can boast of having women authors. It is indicative of the fact that the ancient Indian society was socially at an evolved stage with not even a trace of misogyny. The NCERT authors invert this reality, and paint a misogynist picture of Indic traditions. They are making every effort to fill the students with a feeling of revulsion for their own traditions.

“His wife and sons had to perform a variety of minor rituals.” NCERT, class 6th, p 55 Minor rituals? No such distinction of “minor” or “major” rituals exists in the traditional scriptures of the land. To rationalise their distorted narrative, the NCERT historians invent a hierarchy of rituals.

During the medieval period, when the Hindu society was under attack from various foreign invaders and ideologies, they adhered to the Vedic injunctions of respect for women. As late as seventeenth century, the Mughal emperor Jahangir writes about the Hindu practices as:

“As it is a maxim of the Hindus that no good deed can be thoroughly performed by men in the social state without the partnership of the presence of a wife, whom they have styled the half of a man, and as a portion of the ceremonies and worshippings is yet before him (has to be accomplished), he takes his wife with him into the jungle[1].”

Jahangir was probably referring to the term ‘Ardhangini’ that is used for wife among Hindus. The memoirs of Jahangir can be considered genuine historical records, especially because he was a fanatic Muslim and had nothing togainbypraising the Hinduideology. Yet the NCERTauthors deliberatelyuse loaded language and phrases to create an impression that the ancient societydid not give equitable opportunities to women.

The high status of women escapes NCERT authors’ attention not only in the ancient Indian society but also as recently as the [1] (Tuzuki Jahangiri, p. 358)

seventeenth century. The unbroken tradition of considering women as equal partners is present in all its glory during the scene of coronation of Shivaji, the founder of the Maratha Empire.

“Shiva walked to the place appointed for the bath. Here he sat down on a gold-plated stool, two feet square and two feet high. The queen-consort, Soyra Bai, occupied a seat on his left with her robe knotted up with his, in sign of her being his equal partner in this world and the next (saha-dharmini), as the Hindu sacred law lays down. The heir-apparent Shambhuji sat down close behind. Then the eight ministers of his cabinet (ashta-pradhan), who stood ready at the eight points of the horizon with gold jugs full of the water of the Ganges and other holy rivers, emptied them over the heads of the king queen and crown-prince, amidst the chanting of hymns and the joyous music of the band. Sixteen pure-robed Brahman wives each with five lamps laid on a gold tray, waved the lights round his head to scare away evil influences[2].”

Abrahamic view of women: what NCERT obfuscates The NCERT depiction suggests that while Vedic seers and the societal norms created by them were highly discriminatory for women and Shudras, the Abrahamic religions and their prophets subscribe to a highly egalitarian outlook. Let us separate truth from lies in this depiction.
The verses from Bible and Qu’ran, cherrypicked byNCERT(quoted earlier in the chapter) create a perception that Abrahamic gods, that is, Jehova andAllah, do not discriminate on the basis of either gender or any other

consideration. According to this depiction, Abrahamic god considers only virtues of individuals and is bereft of

[2] (Sarkar, Shivaji and His Times, p. 247)

anykind of partisan attitude. However, in theAbrahamic scriptures, there are many verses which belie this depiction. At several places in Quran, Muslims are clearly instructed to discriminate against non-Muslims, whether men or women:

"And do not marryAl-Mushrikat (idolatresses, etc.) till they believe (worship Allah Alone). And indeed a slave woman who believes is better than a (free) Mushrikah (idolatress, etc.), even though she pleases you. And give not (your daughters) in marriage toAl-Mushrikun till they believe (in Allah Alone) and verily, a believing slave is better than a (free) Mushrik (idolater, etc.), even though he pleases you. Those (Al-Mushrikun) invite you to the Fire, butAllah invites (you) to Paradise and Forgiveness by His Leave, and makes HisAyat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) clear to mankind that they may remember[3]."

For those not familiar with Arabic vocabulary, the word Mushriq means all those who worship any other god except the Islamic god Allah. Mushrikah is the feminine of Mushriq. The above verse is a clear Quranic injunction against people of other belief systems. Since Mushriq is used for all those persons who worship any other god exceptAllah, ipso facto, all Hindus, Buddhists, Christians, Jews and even atheists are to be discriminated against. This should give an idea that the Islamic god is not as egalitarian as he is being made out to be by NCERT authors.

In fact, contradicting the NCERT narrative, the inferior status of women in Islam in comparison to men can be best understood from the following verse according to which Allah has created men as superior beings:—

[3] (Qur'an 2:221)

"Men are in charge of women, as Allah has made one of them superior to the other, and because men spend their wealth for the women; so virtuous

women are the reverent ones, guarding behind their husbands the way Allah has decreed guarding; and the women from whom you fear disobedience, (at first) advise them and (then) do not cohabit with them, and (lastly) beat them; then if they obey you, do not seek to do injustice to them; indeed Allah is Supreme, Great[4]."

It clearly states that a husband has a right over his wife, so much so that he can beat her up even if he merely suspects her of adultery. Bear in mind that there is no such injunction for men suspected of bad behavior. This is in contrast to the Hindu concept ofArdhangini.

On the topic of discriminating against women, the Biblical God is not much different from Allah. The Christian god has cursed the entire womanhood to suffer and to be in a subordinate position to man.

"Unto the woman he (God) said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee[5]."

According to Bible, women have incurred the wrath of Jesus Christ because Eve was deceived by the serpent of Biblical mythology.

"But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to he insilence. ForAdam was First formed, then Eve.And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression[6]."

[4] (Qur'an 4:34)
[5] (Bible - Genesis 3:16)
[6] (Bible – TimothyI, 2:12 – 14)

Yet, going by the picture painted by NCERT experts, Islam and Christianity have a universal appeal, whereas since ancient times, India and its religion offered nothing worthy of respect.

Entire narrative of NCERT textbooks reduces the history of our nation to that of caste conflict and gender discrimination, in which Brahmans are presented as the archetype villain. Had Brahmans devised such a system, or

if such a system even existed in which Shudras and women were kept in perpetual servitude, Yajurved wouldn't include hymns praying for educated shudras or educated mothers.

"; FkekaokpadY; k.khekonkfu t usH; %
czãjkt U; kH; ka' knz; pk; k; p Lok; pkj.kk; AA"
It translates as

"Parmeshwar says: Just like I teach all humans, including Brahmans and Shudras, the benevolent hymns ofVedas, you must also emulate me."

Furthermore, each Vedic hymn has a peculiar way of chanting associated with it and anyone wishing to chant a hymn should have learnt this intonation. This required years of practice under a guru. During a 'yajna', wife of the person performing it must participate in the ceremony otherwise the man is not entitled to perform it. While participating with her husband, she has to chant the Vedic hymns. The Shrautsutra unequivocally instructs:

beaea =ki Ruhi Bsr ~A
That is, the wife has to chant this hymn.

If women were not allowed to studyVedas, as alleged by NCERT, then the same priests would not have created texts that required
[7] (Yajurved 26/2)
women to chant those very hymns. Remember, chanting of hymns with proper intonation requires a lot of practice.

Suppressio veri
NCERT books create an impression that Brahmans were the source of misogyny. Ironically, in Brahmanical scriptures women are worshipped as Shakti, the vital force of creation. There are several instances in literature and practice which consider women as sacrosanct as Brahmans. For example, in Mahabharat, it is stated that if a person who has killed a woman or a Brahman, finds acceptance and is not scared even in the company of the king, then it is a serious situation for the king and his kingdom. The epic Mahabharat is selectively quoted by NCERT authors to project that women were not respected in ancient times.

“When Drupada was told about this, he protested. However, the seer Vyasa arrived and told him that the Pandavas were in reality incarnations of Indra, whose wife had been reborn as Draupadi, and they were thus destined for each other. Vyasa added that in another instance a young woman had prayed to Shiva for a husband, and in her enthusiasm, had prayed five times instead of once. This woman was now reborn as Draupadi, and Shiva had fulfilled her prayers. Convinced by these stories, Drupada consented to the marriage.”

Then the teaser for the children is:
Why do you think the author(s) offered three explanations for a single episode?

NCERT, class 6th, p 76

There is a strange discrepancy in this passage. The teaser at the passage’s end states, ‘three’explanations, but the NCERT authors presents only *two*. When we enquired (through RTI application) about this discrepancy from the Council, they accepted that they did not have any records for it.

However, the fact is that there are indeed three explanations given in the epic Mahabharat about the union of Draupadi with five husbands. This reason was put forward by the eldest Pandav Yudhishthir. He states that:—

My tongue never lies and nor I have any leanings towards unrighteous conduct (v/ eZ); but my mind is inclined for this marriage, that is why this marriage cannot be unrighteous. In the Puranas, there is an instance when a girl of Gautam gotra, named Jatila, married seven sages. Similarly, Varakshi, the daughter of sage Kandu also married ten great men, who were mutual brothers. The command of Guru is considered righteous (/ eZl axr) and Mother is considered to be the supreme Guru. Since the command of this marriage has come from our mother, therefore this is the only righteous decision for us[8].”

The above explaination from Mahabharat runs counter to the narrative of NCERT books on two counts: they carefully try to establish two points throughout their books – mothers were not respected in ancient Indian

society and Brahmans were misogynist. But, including this explanation ofYudhishthir would have exposed the propaganda of NCERT authors on both these counts, so they deliberately omit it from the pages.

After removing this explanation, they start doing what they do best – obfuscate, confuse and lie to the students.
Present-day historians *suggest* that the fact that the author(s) describe a polyandrous union indicates that polyandry *may have been* prevalent amongst ruling elites at some point of

[8] (Mahabharat, vol 1, p. 649)

time. At the same time, the fact that so many different explanations are offered for the episode (Source 16) *suggests* that polyandry gradually fell into disfavor amongst the Brahmanas, who *reworked* and developed the text through the centuries. *Some historians note* that while the practice of polyandry *may have seemed* unusual or even undesirable from the Brahmanical point of view, it was (and is) prevalent in the Himalayan region. Others *suggest* that there *may have been* a shortage of women during times of warfare, and this led to polyandry. In other words, it was attributed to a situation of crisis. Some early sources suggest that polyandry was not the only or even the most prevalent form of marriage. Why then did the author(s) choose to associate this practice with the central characters of the Mahabharata? We need to remember that *creative* literature often has its own narrative requirements and does not always literally reflect social realities."

NCERT, class 12th, p 77

A spectacular feat is achieved! The reasons put forward include that such marriages were only among elites, limited only to a particular region and, surprise of surprises, were due to 'shortage of women during times of warfare'. What kind of warfare is this which creates a shortage of women instead of men? NCERT historians, instead of using facts, reduce history to guesswork and wild conjectures – "may have been", "suggests", "may have seemed" are all employed to justify their biased narrative.

Mother in Indic tradition

Hindu societywas characterised bythe Rishika tradition, and woman as a wife was considered ardhangini in contrast to private property of husband. In her role as a mother, she was considered the first guru of a child. In contrast to such a women-centric society, the Abrahamic traditions are male centric. For instance, in Bible, the genealogyof Christ is traced only through his male ancestors; and it is Islamic tradition to identifyan individual only by father's name, such as 'Wasim bin Imran'which translates into Wasim, the son of Imran, etc. In contrast to this, in Indic traditions, we frequently find children called bytheir mother's name. For instance, Lord Krishna is called Devaki Nandan(son of Devaki), Arjun is called Kauntey (son of Kunti) and Parth (son of Pritha; Pritha is another name of Kunti) and Karan is called Radhey (son of Radha).

Keeping this tradition, the Satvahana kings of South India wrote their names along with the names of their mothers. Some examples given by NCERT are raja Gotami-puta Siri-Satakani, raja Vasithiputa (sami-) Siri-Pulumayi, raja Gotami-puta sami-Siri-YanaSatakani, raja Madhari-puta svami-Sakasena, raja Vasathi-puta Chatarapana-Satakani, raja Hariti-putaVinhukada, ChutukulanamdaSatakamni, raja Gotami-puta Siri-Vijaya- Satakan.

After this mention, authors of NCERT books go to great length to explain away that mothers were not very important in the ancient Indian society. Notice here the gymnastics of words and the ridiculous explanations presented:—

"The gotra of women – One Brahmanical practice, evident from *c*. 1000 BCE onwards, was to classifypeople (especially Brahmanas) in terms of gotras. Each gotra was named after a Vedic seer, and all those who belonged to the same gotra were regarded as his descendants. Two rules about gotra were particularly important: women were expected to give up their father's gotra and adopt that of their husband on marriage and members of the same gotra could not marry…The term Gotami puta means son of Gotami. Names like Gotami and Vasithi *are feminine forms* of Gotama and Vasistha, Vedic seers after whom gotras were named…."

NCERT, class 12th, p 58 After reducing the legitimacy of this significance of mothers by stating that the names used are 'feminine forms', NCERT

authors then explain it away by ingenious use of insinuations on the very next page. Under the title – WERE MOTHERS IMPORTANT?

"We have seen that Satavahan rulers were identified through metronymics (names derived from that of the mother). *Although this may suggest that mothers were important, we need to be cautious before we arrive at any conclusion*. In the case of Satavahanas we know that succession to the throne was generally patrilineal."

NCERT, class 12th, p 58

If a woman did have access to resources, it was not that society was worthy of respect, it *has to be explained away* as an aberration due to her being from upper class. Not one word or phrase that can redeem society.

Readers should keep in mind that it is the same set of authors who painted a picture of Islam being egalitarian.

Generally, when a society's ethics are to be judged from literature, critics use the traits that are assigned to the leading characters by authors of the literature. For example, while judging the value system during the age of Ramayan, one would surmise that society respected those who obeyed their parents and not those who kidnapped other person's wives. But, NCERT authors turn even this critical tool on its head. They give an example in which the son expressly disobeys his mother.And guess who is projected as role model? Duryodhan! Just to prove that the ancient Indic society was so debased that it did not give importance to mothers.

"A MOTHER'S ADVICE – The Mahabharata describes how, when war between the Kauravas and the Pandavas became almost inevitable, Gandhari made one last appeal to her eldest son Duryodhana: By making peace you honour your father and me, as well as your well-wishers … it is the wise man in control of his senses who guards his kingdom. Greed and anger drag a man away from his profits; by defeating these two enemies a king conquers the earth … You will happily enjoy the earth, myson, along with the wise and heroic Pandavas … There is no good in a war, no law (dharma) and profit (artha), let alone happiness; nor is there (necessarily) victory in the end

– don't set your mind on war… Duryodhana did not listen to this advice and fought and lost the war."

NCERT, class 12th, p 60

Since, it is Mahabharat that the NCERT quotes, we reproduce here just a few verses of the epic that instruct about the position of parents in a household.

"My parents are my chief deities. I do for them, whatever has to be done for gods. Just like there are 33 deities worthy of worship for others, my parents deserve the same treatment from me. O Brahman! These parents of mine are supreme deities for me and I satisfy them by offering fruits, flowers and gems to them[9]."
"O learned Brahman! For those who want to progress in life, there are five Gurus – Father, Mother, Agni, Parmatam and Guru. Whoever will behave properly with them, it will

[9] (Mahabharat, vol 2, p. 706)

be as if he has done the supreme service. This is the essence of Sanatan Dharm[10]."
"O righteous man! Immediately proceed to serve your parents without any laziness. According to me, there is no duty, superior to this[11]."

"Some people consider mother to be worthy of maximum adulation. Others are of the opinion that father is more significant. But, it is the mother who performs the tough job of bringing up the off-springs[12]."

"The significance of mother is more than the weight of Earth. The grandeur of a Father is higher than the sky[13]."

In Shantiparv, the 108th chapter is devoted to the issue of parents and preceptor.The patriarch Bheeshm explains toYudhishthir that:—
"BHEESHM SAYS: O King! I think that worshipping ones parents and Gurus is the most important thing. Byperforming this deed, one can gain fame in this world and a superior after-life.

Whatever command is given by parents or Guru should be obeyed to, whether it is righteous or not.

Those who devote themselves to obeying the commands of their parents and Guru need not perform anyother good deed. The learned men say that whatever they command is in itself a pious deed.
Mother, Father and Guru, these three are the three worlds, these are the three ashrams, these three are the three Veds and these three are the three fires.

[10] (Ibid p 707)
[11] (Ibid p 708)
[12] (Ibid p 695)
[13] (Ibid p 987)

Mother is considered as 'dakshinagni'. The three-fold agnis of Mother, Father and Guru are superior to the three agnis of the physical world.
If you do not make a mistake in serving the three of them, then you will be victorious over the three worlds. You will be able to overcome this world by serving your father, the next world by serving your mother and brahmlok by serving the Guru.

The significance of a vidyaguru exceeds that of ten 'acharyas', that of father exceeds that of ten 'vidyagurus' and that of mother exceeds that of ten fathers...therefore there is no Guru equivalent to a mother.

Mother and Father are not to be killed even if they commit a crime.

The deed which brings joy to a father, brings joyto 'prajapati Brahma' also and a deed which brings joy to a mother is equivalent to the worship of entire earth.

Mother and Father are never to be disrespected. Just like a Guru, mother and father are also to be respected.

One who opposes Mother, father or teacher by his thoughts, actions or speech, he commits a sin which is worse then foeticide. There is none so degraded in the world as him.

One who has been brought up by mother and father, if he does not take care of his parents, then he commits a crime which is more severe than foeticide[14].”

All these sublime messages are overlooked and the example of Duryodhan is presented as a role model of ancient society. Then,

[14] (Mahabharat, vol 5, pp. 340-341)

NCERT authors go for the jugular byimmediatelyasking a question. The teaser that follows this box is:–
Does this passage give you an idea about the way in which mothers were viewed in early Indian society?
NCERT, class 12th, p 60

To malign Indian traditions regarding respect for mothers, NCERT authors take the example of the main villain of the epic. But, in case of Christianity, we find Jesus Christ preaching his disciples to hate, not only their parents but all relatives.

“If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple[15].”

And yet, NCERT authors have the audacity to proclaim that:— “Christ’s teachings appealed to ordinary people, and spread through West Asia, Africa and Europe.”

NCERT, class 6th, p 109 **If there is a virtue – it must be an aberration**

NCERT authors use crafty phrases and headings to convey an image of a misogynist society:
“BEYOND BIRTH: RESOURCES AND STATUS –
GENDERED ACCESS TO PROPERTY – According to the Manusmriti, the paternalestate was to be divided equally amongst sons after the death of the parents, with a special share for the eldest. Women could not claim a share of these resources.At the same time, the Manusmriti*warned*

women against hoarding family property, or even their own valuables, without husband's permission…. You have read about wealthy women such as the Vakataka queen Prabhavati Gupta (Chapter 2). However, cumulative

[15] (Bible – Luke 14:26)

evidence – bothepigraphic and textual– suggests that while upper-class women *may have had* access to resources, land, cattle and money were generally controlled by men. In other words, socialdifferences betweenmen and women were sharpened because of the difference in access to resources." NCERT, class 12th, p 68

Let us look at the actual stand of sage Manu regarding women and her rights. A section of 3rd chapter of Manusmriti is devoted to women.

"Fathers, Brothers, Husband and Brother-in-law should be respectful towards their daughters, sisters, wives and sistersin-law. Those who want their own well-being should never hurt or quarrel with women.

The families in which women are respected, gods make their abode in those families, whereas the households which do not respect women are unable to get good fruits for their efforts. The households in which women are in a state of despair and sorrow is soon destroyed; whereas the households, in which women are without any worries and stress prosper in every respect. The households which are cursed by ill-treated women, face ill luck from all sides and are destroyed, as if they have been poisoned. Therefore, all those men, who are desirous of a fulfilling life should take good care of womenfolk. They should always be kept in cheerful spirits and should be showered with gifts on special occasions and festivals. All those families in which wives are satisfied byhusbands and husbands are satisfied by wives make progress while the households where the spouses are unsatisfied are full of grief and misery[16]."

[16] (Manusmriti, pp. 256-259)

Keeping this attitude of the sage in mind, now let us look at the verse in which, according to NCERT authors, he 'warns' women against hoarding property.

"u fugkjafL=k; %dq; q%dqVqEckn~cgqeè; xkr ~A

Lodk nfi p foÙkkf¼LoL; Hr qjZukK; kA
It states that women living in a joint family (dqVqEckn~cgqeè; xkr ~) with many members should not steal for personal expenditure or for hoarding it. She should not use even her own money for personal uses without permission from her husband.
Is it a warning as alleged by NCERT or just a suggestion by an elderly person for his daughter or daughter-in-law?

Let there be no positive association
It is interesting to note that nineteenth century social activist Raja Rammohun Roy used Manusmriti and many other Hindu scriptures to drive home the point that it was not Hinduism which was the culprit for manyof the social evils prevalent at the time, but distorted social practices. He was of the opinion that treatment of women in Indian society, at his time, was an aberration which was contrary to the lessons of Hindu scriptures. He has to his credit translations of many scriptures from Sanskrit to English. Before we discuss his translations, look at the following paragraph:—

"The strategy adopted by Rammohun was used by later reformers as well. Whenever they wished to challenge a practice that seemed harmful, they tried to find a verse or sentence in the *ancient sacred texts* that the practice as it existed at present was against early tradition."

NCERT, class 8th, p 110

An unwaryreader will be excused for missing the NCERT authors' trick here. Notice that no name of scripture has been mentioned. Why?
There are numerous passages in NCERT books where Manusmriti and Mahabharat are mentioned by name. In all such passages, NCERT authors attach a negative connotation to Manusmriti, Mahabharat and evenVedas; and in this case, no scripture is named, especiallyManusmriti, whereas Raja

Rammohun Royclearly gives reference from Manu regarding high status with which women were to be treated. Is it because they want Hinduism and its scriptures to be associated with misogyny and evil practices?

Anyway, let us look at what Raja Rammohun actually did. He established that according toHindu sages and their scriptures, women were to be treated at par with men. He quoted not only Manu, but also various sages to drive home his point.

"All the ancient lawgivers unanimously award to a mother an equal share with her son in the property left by her deceased husband, in order that she mayspend her remaining days independently of her children; as is evident from the following passages:
Yagnuvul Kyu (Yagnvalakya) – After the death of a father, let a mother also inherit an equal share with her sons in the division of the property left by their father

Kotyayuni (Katyayani) – The father being dead, the mother should inherit an equal share with the son.
Narudu (Narad) – After the death of a husband, a mother should receive a share equal to that of each of his sons. Vishnoo the legislator – Mothers should be receivers of shares according to the portion allowed to the sons.
Vrihusputi – After his (the father's) death, a mother, the parent of his sons, should be entitled to an equal share with his sons; their step-mothers also to equal shares; but daughters to a fourth part of the shares of the sons.
Vyasu – The wives of a father by whom he has no male issue, are considered as entitled to equal shares with his sons, and all the grand-mothers (including the mothers and stepmothers of the father), are said to be entitled as mothers[17]."

Contrast this with the injunctions of Quran regarding distribution of property:
"Allah commands you as regards your children's
(inheritance); to the male, a portion equal to that of two
females;[18]

Contraryto the contents of Manusmriti, which are suggestions from a sage, the injunctions of Qur'an are non-negotiable as Allah tells further:

"These are the limits (set by)Allah (or ordainments as regards laws of inheritance), and whosoever obeys Allah and His Messenger (Muhammad SAW) will be admitted to Gardens under which rivers flow (in Paradise), to abide therein, and that will be the great success[19]."

Although Manu did not warn, but Allah is unambiguous in his warning: "And whosoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger (Muhammad SAW), and transgresses His limits, He will cast him into the Fire, to abide therein; and he shall have a disgraceful torment[20]."

The points which have to be considered here are:
Instructions of Quran are not negotiable as they are directly fromAllah.

[17] (Roy, 1832, pp. 271-272)
[18] (Qur'an 4:11)
[19] (Qur'an 4:13)
[20] (Qur'an 4:14)

Any injunction of Manusmriti can be rejected and one still will be a Hindu, but by rejecting any injunction of Quran, one ceases to be a Muslim.
There is no ambiguity in the instructions
This treatment is if she is 'suspected'of adultery. She might not have actually committed it.
There is no corresponding right for women over men in Quran.

And, how do NCERT authors present this aspect of Islam - by cherry picking one single verse as explained earlier.

Patriliny
Rival nations, warring groups or evangelists use this trick to fraudulently vilify their opponents. Such faulty portrayals are used to demonise one section of society or to create a perception in the minds of a group that they were discriminated against by another group. Generation of such atrocity

literature is then used by vested groups to intervene and present themselves as saviours of that particular section of society. The current NCERT books are not only pitting 'lower castes' against 'upper castes', but are also promoting an impression that the ancient Indian societydid not give due rights to women. It is being done by generous use of half lies and loaded terminology. One term which NCERT authors use to present ancient India as misogynist is 'patriliny'.

"At one level, the Mahabharata is a story about this. It describes a *feud* over land and power between two groups of cousins, the Kauravas and the Pandavas, who belonged toa single ruling family, that of the Kurus, a lineage dominating one of the janapadas (Chapter 2, Map 1). Ultimately, the conflict ended in a battle, in which the Pandavas emerged victorious.After that, patrilineal succession was proclaimed. While patriliny had existed prior to the composition of the epic, the central story of the Mahabharata reinforced the idea that it was valuable. Under patriliny, sons could claim the resources (including the throne in the case of kings) of their fathers when the latter died.
Most ruling dynasties (c.sixth centuryBCE onwards) claimed to follow this system, although there were variations in practice: sometimes there were no sons, in some situations brothers succeeded one another, sometimes other kinsmen claimed the throne, and, in very exceptional circumstances, women such as Prabhavati Gupta (Chapter 2) exercised power.
The concern with patriliny was not unique to ruling families. It is evident in mantras in ritual texts such as the Rigveda. *It is possible that these attitudes were shared by wealthy men and those who claimed high status, including Brahmanas."*

NCERT, class 12th, pp 55 – 56 The grandeur of the narrative is being systematically run down and underplayed. The epic battle is reduced to a 'feud'. The empire of Kurus, which encompassed a vast region, is reduced to a 'Janapad'. The reason for the 'feud' is not any lofty ideals due to which it has been considered as a 'Dharmyudh' by the traditions, but the petty reason of 'land and power'.
Once again, the villains of this discrimination are Brahmans who 'claimed high status, and were 'wealthy men'. We are highlighting this passage to

bring forth the selective treatment given out to Brahmans and traditions of India. The same bunchof authors change the wording when it comes to explaining foreign traditions. To appreciate this subtle jugglery of words, contrast the above passage with the one used to depict the social structure of Roman Empire:— "Succession to the throne was based as far as possible on family descent."

NCERT, class 11th, p 61

Suddenly, the word patriliny disappears although historical facts remain the same. Likewise, all Turks and Mughals also followed patriliny, but the same aspirations are not cast on their traditions. Only one example will suffice.

"The Emperor Shah Jahan used to say, "At times I fear that my eldest son [Dara Shukoh] has become the enemy of good men; Murad Bakhshhas set his heart ondrinking; Muhammad Shuja has no good trait except contentment (i. e., easy good nature). But the resolutionand intelligence ofAurangzib prove that he [alone] can shoulder this difficult task (viz., ruling India). But there is great sickness and infirmityin his physical frame[21].

If this is not patriliny, then what is?

Reductio ad Hitlerum

Similar devious tricks are used by NCERT to create an impression that all Brahmans, including sage Manu, were some kind of control freaks who were always on the lookout for devious methods to control women for their selfish needs. They created a social system in which women were discriminated against. Women were not given any rights in the household. Urbanisation led to weakening of their oppressive grip on general population. To regain control, they composed 'Dharamshastras and Dharamsutras', which contain highlydiscriminatory content.

"While sons were important for the continuity of the patrilineage, daughters were viewed rather differentlywithin

[21] (Ahkam iAlamgiri, p. 30)

this framework. They had no claims to the resources of the household. At the same time, marrying them into families outside the kin was considered desirable. This system, called exogamy (literally, marrying outside), meant that the lives of young girls and women belonging to families that claimed high status were often carefully regulated to ensure that they were married at the "right" time and to the "right" person. This gave rise to the belief that kanyadana or the gift of a daughter in marriage was an important religious duty of the father. With the emergence of new towns (Chapter 2), social life became more complex. People from near and far met to buyand sell their products and share ideas in the urban milieu. *This may have led to* a questioning of earlier beliefs and practices (see also Chapter 4). *Faced with this challenge*, the Brahmanas responded by laying down codes of social behaviour in great detail. These were meant to be followed by Brahmanas in particular and the rest of society in general. From *c*. 500 BCE, these norms were compiled in Sanskrit texts known as the Dharmasutras and Dharmashastras. The most important of such works, the *Manusmriti*, was compiled between *c*. 200 BCE and 200 CE."

NCERT, class 12th, pp 57 – 58

Can there be a better method to sow seeds of anger and loathing against a tradition and its architects than by pitting women, i.e. half the population, against them?

This is being done against a sage and a tradition, which has given the most sublime treatment to women, in theory and in practice. "O men! The women of the household are 'Shri' i.e. the
Goddess Lakshmi for your house because there is no
difference between the Goddess, wealth, splendor and
women. The womenof household bring good fortune, provide progeny and illuminate your household, therefore they are worthy of worship.

O men! She creates for you what you do not have, takes care of what is present and performs other routine tasks required for a well-managed household. She is the one who manages all your affairs.

The entire happiness of a house and the elderly of the house is due to the women of the house. It is the women who perform pious duties, render service and provide conjugal comfort to you[22]."

The manner in which words are twisted and sentences designed to sneer at ancient customs, even when they are perfectly understandable and withstand the highest levels of scrutiny, is appalling.

"What is *interesting* is that the Dharmasutras and Dharmashastras recognized as many as eight forms of marriage. Of these, the first four were considered as "good" while the remaining were condemned. *It is possible* that these were practiced by those who did not accept Brahmanical norms.

EIGHT FORMS OF MARRIAGE

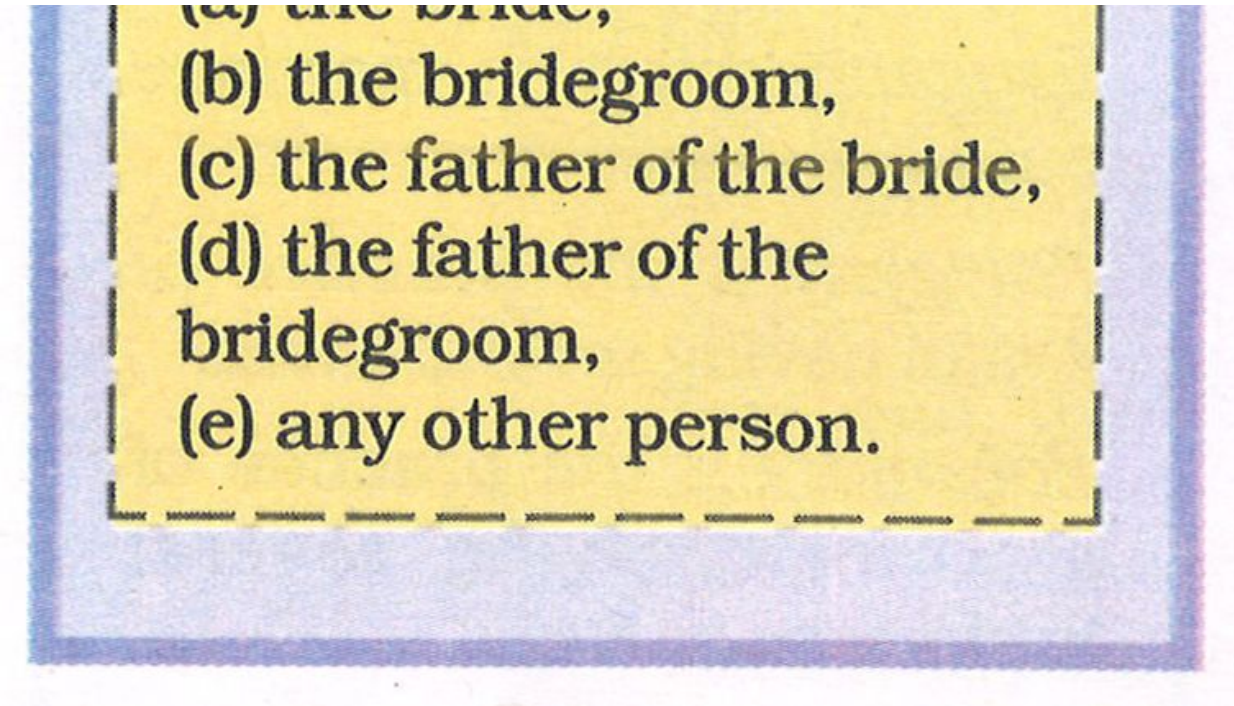
Here are the first, fourth, fifth and sixth forms of marriage from the Manusmriti: First: The gift of a daughter, after dressing her in costly clothes and honouring her with presents of jewels, to a man learned in the Veda whom the father himself invites. Fourth: The gift of a daughter by the father after he has addressed the couple with the text, "May both of you perform your duties together", and has shown honour

[22] (Manusmriti, pp. 745-746)

to the bridegroom. Fifth: When the bridegroom receives a maiden, after having given as much wealth as he can afford to the kinsmen and to the bride herself, according to his own will. Sixth: The voluntary union of a maiden and her lover … which springs from desire …

➲ For each of the forms, discuss whether the decision about the marriage was taken by
(a) the bride,
(b) the bridegroom,
(c) the father of the bride,
(d) the father of the bridegroom,
(e) any other person.

➲ For each of the forms, discuss whether the decision about the marriage was taken by
(a) the bride



For each of the forms discuss whether the decision about the marriage was taken by (a) the bride, (b) the bridegroom, (c) the father of the bride, (d) the father of the bridegroom, (e) any other person?"

NCERT, class 12, p 58

The selective presentation of the types of marriages creates an impression that the marriage in which the bride did not have a say is considered good, whereas the one in which she has a say is condemned. The second message embedded in the extract is that the categorisation was based on the whims of Brahmans and those who did not subscribe to these whimsical instructions were looked down upon. Nothing could be farther from truth. Let us look at the last two forms of marriage, which the NCERT has deliberately omitted.
"HYMN 33
Forcibly kidnapping an unwilling, crying and protesting girl after beating, physically overpowering her relatives and then having a forced union is known as Rakshas marriage.

HYMN 34
The worst marriage is the one in which a sleeping, intoxicated or mentally

unsound girl is forced for a union when found alone is known as Paishach marriage.[23]"

Sage Manu has termed these marriages as worst forms as they are violent in nature. In the contemporary sense and in present jurisprudence such acts would be called rape. Yet, it is presented as some kind of 'Brahman' versus 'Non-Brahman' conflict by the NCERT authors.

Insulting Indian women, NCERT style

Ever since Islamised Arabs and Turks— fired by Islamic zeal— started invading Hindustan, the northern region bore the brunt of these marauders from north-west. The men and women of Hindustan both paid a heavy price. The historical records tell us that by the beginning of the eighth century, Hindu women had become aware of the detestable practice of concubinage prevalent in Dar ul Islam (land of Islam) and treatment which was meted out to enslaved women. Infact, the idea that war booty, including women of defeated infidels, was a gift from Allah was an irresistible incentive to Muslims. These marauders fit the description of terrorists given in traditional Indic scriptures:

"vfXunksxjnÜÓSo / ugkjhp l qIr gk
{k=knkjki gkjhp "kMr sákr r kf; u%A[24]

[23] (Manusmriti, pp. 244-245) [24] (ShukrNiti 3:32)

Those who steal other's money, put on fire other's property, poison someone, kill someone who is sleeping, one who occupies other's agricultural field and those who kidnap women are the terrorists.

One of the straegies adopted by some women in India to save themselves from the clutches of these terrorists was self-immolation. This rite was called *Jauhar*. Jauhar is purva-marana (death of wife before the foreseen death of her husband). It was practiced by women to save their dignity and chastity.

As already explained, women of non-Muslims suffered the most at the hands of Muslim armies. Reason for this was the licence to concubinage, which Islam gives its adherents. When the first Arab inroad was made into Sindh, in the earlyeighth century, non-Muslim women were aware of this ghastly

practice. Medieval history is replete with instances where non-Muslim women chose to end their lives than to lead the degrading life of a sex slave for invaders. The exact number of such women is difficult to calculate but we are producing examples of this practice to give an idea of its prevalence.

One of the earliest recorded incidents of Jauhar being performed is at the time when Muhammad bin Qasim invaded Sindh province in 712. The Hindu king Dahir was repelling theArabs, who had come with a massive army to invade Hindustan. When sister of Dahir received intelligence that a defeat was imminent, she decided to end her life in preference to be enslaved and sold as chattel. She summoned all the women in the fort and addressed to them: (The following narration is from Chach Nama written inArabic):

"Muhammad Kasim disposed his army, and ordered the miners to dig and undermine the walls…

…Thus the bastions were thrown down. Bai(Main), the sister of Dahir, assembled all her women, and said, Jaisiya is *Excerpt* separated from us and Mohammad Kasim has come. God*from*
Chach forbid that we should owe our liberty to these outcast cow *Nama* eaters! Our honor would be lost. Our respite is at end, and

there is no hope of any escape.; let us collect wood, cotton and oil, for I think we should burn ourselves and go to meet our husbands. If any wish to save herself, she may. So they went into a house, set it on fire, and burnt themselves.

Muhammad took the fort, and stayed there for two or three days. He put six thousand fighting men, who were in the fort, to the sword, and shot some with arrows. The other dependants and servants were taken prisoners, with their wives and children. Detail of the slaves, cash, and stuffs, which were taken. It is said that when the fort was captured, all the treasures, property, and arms, except those which were taken away by Jaisiya, fell into the hands of the victors, and they were all brought before Muhammad Kasim. When the number of the prisoners was calculated, it was found to amount to thirtythousand persons, amongst whom thirtywere the daughters of chiefs,

and one of them was Rai Dahir's sister's daughter, whose name was Jaisiya.'They were sent to Hajjaj. The head of Dahir and the fifth part of the prisoners were forwarded in charge of K'ab, son of Maharat. When the head of Dahir, the women, and the property all reached Hajjaj, he prostrated himself before God, offered thanksgivings and praises, for, he said, he had in reality obtained all the wealth and treasures and dominions of the world.

Hajjaj sends the head of Dahir, and some of his standards, to the Capital. Hajjaj then forwarded the head, the umbrellas, and wealth, and the prisoners to "Walid the Khalifa. When the Khalifa of the time had read the letter, he praisedAlmighty God. He sold some of those daughters of the chiefs, and some he granted as rewards.

When he saw the daughter of Rai Dahir's sister, he was much struck with her beauty and charms, and began to bite his finger with astonishment. 'Abdullah bin 'Abbas desired to take her, but the Khalifa said, "O mynephew!Iexceedingly admire this girl, and am so enamoured of her, that I wish to keep her for myself. Nevertheless, it is better that you should take her to be the mother of your children."[25]

This is the character of Khalifa, the highest ranked Muslim. The behaviour reflected in the above passage is not an aberration but a rule. According to Jihadi doctrines of war, women of non-Muslims are treated as chattel and sex objects. Muhammad Qasim was able to establish a temporary rule in Sindh province but due to the grit shown bythe local population prevented him from imposing Islamic practices in the subdued region. But whenever possible, women were kidnapped to be kept as concubines or sold into slavery[26].

All the raids were used to kidnap non-Muslim women who could fetch a handsome price in the flourishing slave markets in the Islamic world of that time.

"About the year 140 h., the Khalif Al Mansur appointed Hasham to Sind, who conquered countries which had hitherto resisted the progress of the Muhammadan arms. He despatched 'Amni bin Jamal with a fleet of barks to the coast of Barada (in Gujarat), against which point, we are informed by

Tabari and IbnAsir, another expedition was despatched in 160 h., in which, though theArabs succeeded in taking the

[25] (ChachNama: History of India as told by Its own Historians, Vol. 1, pp 171-173)
[26] (History of India as told by Its own Historians, Vol. 1 p 468)

town, sickness swept away a great portion of the troops, while they were stationed in an Indian port, and the rest, on their return, were shipwrecked on the coast of Persia; so that the Khalif Mahdi was deterred from any further attempts upon India.'A body of troops, at the time when 'Amru was employed against Barada, penetrated into "the kingdom of Hind, conquered the country of Kashmir, *and took many women and children captive*."' The whole province of Multan was also reduced[27]."

WhenMahmud Ghaznavidecided toinvade India, the signs ofArabic conquest were not visible anywhere except in a few small pockets. The raids of Mahmud were typicalin their behavior towards captured women and children. The Hindu Shahi kings had been fighting the invasions, generation after generation. When king Jaipal was taken prisoner by Mahmud, the treatment to royal and ordinary women was according to the Islamic theology.

"The booty as was beyond all bounds and all calculation, *including five hundred thousand slaves, beautiful men and women*.[28]"

Since the early inroads ofArabic invaders, throughout the period of Khiljis and Tuqhlaqs and Lodhis, till the last of Mughals, this theory was in full practice. This degrading treatment was not acceptable to Indian women who were used to highest standards of chivalry and veneration of virtues. When faced with a situation of imminent captivity and concubinage, they preferred death to the life in store for them.

When Muhammad Tughlaq was the Sultan of Delhi, one of his nephews named Bahauddin refused to acknowledge him as the
[27] (ibid, Vol. 1 p 444)
[28] (TarikheYamini, Elliot and Dowson, Vol 2, p. 26)

king. Force was sent to subdue him but he escaped and took shelter with the Hindu king of Kambila. Sultan's forces encircled the territory and the king was driven to desperation.

"Then he commanded a great fire to be prepared and lighted. Then he burned his furniture, and said to his wives and daughters, "I am going to die, and such of you as prefer it, do the same." Then it was seen that each one of these women washed herself, rubbed her body with sandal-wood, kissed the ground before the rai of Kambila, and threw herself upon the pile. All perished. The wives of his nobles, ministers, and chief men imitated them, and other women also did the same.

The rai, in his turn, washed, rubbed himself with sandal, and took his arms, but did not put on his breastplate. Those of his men who resolved to die with him followed his example. Theysallied forth to meet the troops of the Sultan, and fought till every one of them fell dead. The town was taken, its inhabitants were made prisoners, and eleven sons of the rai were made prisoners and carried to the Sultan, who made them all Musulmans[29]."

Similar fate was chosen by numerous women in the face of impending defeat during the time dubiously dubbed as Sultanate period. The following extract is from the pen ofAmir Khusro, the celebrated Sufi poet and a disciple of Nizamuddin Auliya. The wording and tenor willalso give readers aninsight intoa Sufimind:—

The king himself went to conduct the siege of Rantambhor. "The Saturnian Hindus, who pretend to relation with that planet, had for purposes of defence collected fire in each bastion. Every day the fire of those infernals fell on the light of the Musulmans, and as there were no means of

[29] (Batuta, Rihla: History of India as told by Its Own Historians, p. 615)

Excerpt from Khusro extinguishing it they filled bags with earth and prepared entrenchments. You might have said that the sewing up of the bags containing the sand looked as if the king of the earth was preparing to invest the fortress with an earthen robe of honour. When the bank of the entrenchment had reached the height of the western bastion of the fortress,

the Royal Westerns, shot large earthen balls against that infidel fort, so that the hearts of the Hindus began to quail."

"Some newly converted Musulmans among the ill-starred Mughals had turned their faces from the sun of Islam, and joined those Saturnians;" but they discharged their arrows ineffectually against the party they had deserted. "The victorious array remained encamped under that fort from the month of Rajab to Zi-l ka'da." Every day they collected at the foot of their outwork or entrenchment, and made vigorous attacks, rushing like salamanders through the fire which surrounded them. "The stones which were shot from the catapults and balistas, within and without the fort, encountered each other half-way, and emitted lightning. They fell upon the fort like hailstones, and when the garrison ate them, they became cold and dead." "No provisions remained in the fort, and famine prevailed to such an extent, that a grain of rice was purchased for two grains of gold." One night the Rai lit a fire at the top of the hill, and threw his women and family into the flames, and rushing on the enemy with a few devoted adherents, they sacrificed their lives in despair. "On the fortunate date of the 3rd of Zi-l ka'da a.h. 700 (July, 1301 a.d.), this strong fort was taken by the slaughter of the stinking Rai." Jhain was also captured, "an iron fort, an ancient abode of idolatry, and a new city of the people of the faith arose." The temple of Bahir Deo, and the temples of other gods, were all razed to the ground[30]."

"Mas'ud felt disposed to listen to the proposals, until he understood that some Muhammadan merchants, having been seen by the garrison, were then captives in the place. He accordingly broke up the conference and besieged the fort, ordering the ditch to be filled up with sugarcanes from the adjacent plantations. This being done, he caused scaling ladders to be applied to the walls; and the fort, after a bloody contest, was taken. The garrison, without distinction, was put to the sword, except the women and children, who were carried off by the soldiers as slaves[31].

In the same work, the sufi poet describes that the Muhammaden army had taken over the fort of Hansi. The extract is: "On Saturday, the 14th of Safar, the Amir had recovered,
and held a darbar, and onTuesday, the 17th, he left the Jailam,

and arrived at the fort of Hansi on Wednesday the 9th of Rabi'u-l awwal, and pitched his camp under the fort, which he invested. Fights were constantly taking place in a manner that could not be exceeded for their severity. The garrison made desperate attempts at defence, and relaxed no effort. In the victorious army the slaves of the household behaved very gallantly, and such a virgin fort was worthy of their valour. At last, mines were sprung in five places, and the wall was brought down, and the fort was stormed by the sword on Monday, ten days before the close of Rabiu-l awwal. The Brahmans and other higher men were slain, and their *women and children were carried away captive*, and

[30] (Khusro, TarikheAlai: Elliot and Dowson, vol. 3, pp. 74-75) [31] (Khwaja Tarikhus Subuktigin: Elliot and Dowson, vol. 2, p. 56)

all the treasure which was found was divided amongst the army. The fort was known in Hindustan as "The Virgin," as no one yet had been able to take it[32]."

When Mahmud raided Bhatia:
Adreadful slaughter ensued, *the women were dishonoured, and the property seized*[33]."

In the same work, Ibn Asir describes the battle between the King of Benaras with Shahabuddin Ghori.
The slaughter of the Hindus was immense; none were spared except women and children, and the carnage of the men went on until the earth was weary[34]."

When Muhammad Bakhtiyar Khilji, a brigand of Qutubuddin, marched to eastern parts of India, he wreaked havoc in Bihar and Bengal.

"Muhammad Bakhtiyar had rushed into the palace and put a number of men to the sword. The Rai fled barefooted by the rear of the palace, and his whole treasure, *and all his wives, maid servants, attendants, and women fell into the hands of the invader*[35]."

The cruelty with which the Meos of Mewat, especially women, were treated gives further evidence of harrowing times for them under the Turkish ruler.

"After the Sultan had thus routed out the Miwattis, and cleared away the jungle in the neighbourhood of the city, he gave the towns and country within the Doab to some distinguished chiefs, with directions to lay waste and destroy

[32] (ibid, p. 59)
[33] (Asir, 1871, p. 248)
[34] (ibid, p. 251)
[35] (Tabakati Naasiri: Elliot and Dowson, vol. 2, p. 309)

the villages of the marauders, to slay the men, to make prisoners of the women and children, to clear awaythe jungle, and to suppress all lawless proceedings.
…In two nights and three days he crossed the Ganges at Kateher, and sending forward a force of five thousand archers, he gave them orders to burn down Kateher and destroy it, to slay every man, and to spare none but women and children, not even boys who had reached the age of eight or nine years[36]."

Before some of the Mughals converted to Islam, they were considered as arch enemies of Islam and its kings, just like any other group of non-Muslims. The Khiljis and Tughlaqs faced stiff competition from Mughals to loot India. The Islamic theologians expressed their glee while mentioning their defeat at the hands of Musalmans.

"An army was sent against them with orders to seize upon the road by which the Mughals must return to the river, and there to encamp, so that when the thirsty Mughals attempted to approach the river they would receive their punishment. These orders were carried out. The Mughals having wasted the Siwdlik, had moved some distance off. When they and their horses returned weary and thirsty to the river, the army of Islam, which had been waiting for them some days, caught them as they expected. They begged for water, and they and all their wives and children were made prisoners. Islam gained a great victory, and brought several thousand prisoners with ropes on their

necks to the fort of Naraniya. The women and children were taken to Dehli, and were sold as slaves in the market[37]."

[36] (Barani, pp. 105-106)
[37] (ibid, p. 199)

We have already seen how NCERT authors have portrayed Timurlame as a heroic figure. The following extract is in his own hand. The readers will find the emphasis of Timurlame on his claim of being a Jihadi:

As soon as it was day I ordered my troops to attack on all four sides at once, and forcing their way into the defiles to kill all the men, to *make prisoners the women and children*, and to plunder and lay waste all their property[38]."

"Amir Shah Malik and Shaikh Muhammad, taking a guide with them, instantly commenced their march, and having arrived at the jungles in which these wretches, forsaken by fortune, had taken refuge, they dismounted, and entering the jungle slew two thousand of these ill-fated Indians with their remorseless sabres, carrying off captives their women and children, and returned with a great booty of kine, buffaloes, and other property[39]."

"All these infidel Hindus were slain, their wives and children were made prisoners, and their property and goods became the spoil of the victors. The soldiers then returned, bringing with them several thousand Hindu women and children who became Muhammadans, and repeated the creed[40]."

"So many fell that the blood ran down in streams. The infidel gabrs[41] were dismayed at the sight, and took to flight. The holy warriors pursued them, and made heaps of slain. A few Hindus, in a wretched plight, wounded and half dead,

[38] (Malfuzti Timuri: History of India as told by Its Own Historians Vol. 3, pp. 401-405)
[39] (Ibid p 415)
[40] (Ibid pp 427 – 428)
[41] A pejorative term used initially for Zoroastrian priests and later on for all non Muslims

escaped, and hid themselves in holes and caves.An immense spoil, beyond all compute, in money, goods and articles, cows and buffaloes, fell into the hands of mysoldiers.All the Hindu women and children in the valley were made prisoners[42].” “Theyassailed it on everyside, and fixing their scaling-ladders they mounted the walls and penetrated to the interior. The men of the garrison having been guilty of conduct worthy of death, were killed. Two thousand thus perished and were sent to hell. The women and children were made prisoners, and the buildings were levelled withthe ground. Bythe favour and grace of God my heart had thus been gratified with the overthrow of the vile infidels of the Siwalik[43].”

Timurlame was not the only one who was proud of murders and rapes that he and his soldiers committed on the population of our country. His exploits are proudly described by numerous devout Muslims as an epitome of behaviour. One such historian was Maulana SharfuddinYazdi, a contemporary of Timurlame. He has also gleefullyrecorded the slaughter and kidnap byrapacious Islamic army.

“The whole army of Islam then ascended the mountain and put all the men to the sword, and carried off the women and children. On the summit of the mountain pyramids were built with the heads of these infidels, who had never bowed their heads in adoration of God[44].”
“Every soldier obtained more than twenty persons as slaves, and some brought as manyas fiftyor a hundred men, women, and children as slaves out of the city[45].”

[42] (Ibid pp 462 – 463)
[43] (Ibid p 468)
[44] (Yazdi, p. 481)
[45] (Ibid p. 502)

“Most of the women were made prisoners wore bracelets of gold or silver on their wrists and legs and valuable rings upon their toes[46].”
“Having thus taken most of the boats they put the men to the sword, and made prisoners of the women and children[47].”

Let us look at the treatment given byNCERT tothese valiant warriors and their sufferings. Under the title 'The Rajputs and Traditions of Heroism' the history book states:—

"These cultural traditions were closely linked with the ideals and aspirations of rulers. From about the eighth century, most of the present-day state of Rajasthan was ruled by various Rajput families. Prithviraj (Chapter 2) was one such ruler. These rulers cherished the ideal of the hero who fought valiantly, often choosing death on the battlefield rather than face defeat. *Stories* about Rajput heroes were recorded in poems and songs, which were recited by specially trained minstrels. These preserved the memories of heroes and were *expected to inspire* others to follow their example. Ordinary people were also *attracted by these stories* – which often depicted *dramatic* situations, and a range of strong emotions
– loyalty, friendship, love, valour, anger, etc.
Did women find a place within these stories? Sometimes, they figure as the cause for conflicts, as men fought with one another to either win or protect women. Women are also *depicted* as following their heroic husbands in both life and death – there are stories about the practice of sati or the immolation of widow on the funeral pyre of their husbands. *So those who followed the heroic ideal often had to pay for it with their lives*."

46 (ibid pp. 503-504) NCERT, class 7th, p 124 [47] (Ibib p. 508)

Notice the wickedness of portrayal. Events, which were historical, are reduced to mere *stories* as if the bravery was fictitious. Then, they are projected as cause of conflict and finally they are almost lampooned for following the heroic ideals, as if these were unnecessary acts of bravado.

The above-mentioned historical records speak of one aspect of Hindu women; one of the ways they chose to react to barbarism of the worst kind. A more holistic portrayal of Rajputs and their traditions has been done by Lieutenant Colonel James Todd, designated as 'political agent to the western Rajput states' during the Colonial rule. He records:

"Position of Women.—In no point does resemblance more attach betweenthe ancient Germanand Scandinavian tribes, and the martialRajput or ancient

Getae, than intheir delicacy towards females, " The Germans," says Tacitus [Germania, viii.], " deemed the advice of a woman in periods of exigence oracular." So does the Rajput, as the bard Chand often exemplifies; and hence they append to her name the epithet Devi (or *contracted* De), godlike.[48]"

The irony is hard to miss that almost a century ago, a Britisher was giving a correct historical narrative of our country as compared to the NCERT authors. Todd describes Rajput women as virtuous, affectionate, and devoted, taking part in the control of the family, sharing with their husbands the dangers of war and sport, contemptuous of the coward, and exercising a salutary influence in public and domestic affairs.

The fiery spirit and high esteem in which these women lived is also illustrated by an event recorded by French traveller Francois Bernier:

[48] (Annals And Antiquities of Rajasthan, vol 1, p. 84)

Excerpt "I may here relate the disdainful reception experienced by *from* *Travels in* the valiant *Jessomseingue* from his wife, a daughter of the *The* house of Rana. When it was announced that he was *Mogul* *Empire* approaching with his gallant band of about five hundred

Ragipous (Rajputs), the melancholyremnant of nearlyeight thousand, at the head of whom he had fought with noble intrepidity, quitting the field from necessity, but not with dishonour; instead of sending to congratulate the gallant soldier on his escape, and console him in his misfortune, she dryly commanded that the gates of the castle should be closed against him. 'The man is covered with infamy,' she said, 'and he shall not enter within these walls. I disown him for myhusband, and these eyes can never again behold him. No son-in-law of *Rana* can possess a soul so abject. He who is allied to his illustrious house must imitate the virtues of that great man: if he cannot vanquish he should die.' The next moment the temper of her mind took another turn. 'Prepare the funeral pile,' she exclaimed. 'The fire shall consume my body. I am deceived; my husband is certainly dead; it cannot possibly be otherwise:' and then again, transported with rage, she broke into

the bitterest reproaches. In this humour she continued eight or nine days, refusing the whole of that time to see her husband. The arrival of her mother was attended, however, with a beneficial effect: she, in some measure, appeased and comforted her daughter, bysolemnlypromising, inthe Raja's name, that as soon as he should be somewhat recovered from his fatigue, he would collect a second army, attack *Aureng-Zebe,* and fully retrieve his reputation. This anecdote may serve as a specimen of the spirit which animates the women of this country[49]."

The bravery of Indian women was not restricted to the instances of Jauhar. If occasion demanded, they took to battlefield side by side their armies. When Muhammad Ghuri advanced upon Gujarat inAD 1178 with a large army. Merutuñga writes in his *PrabandhachintãmaNi* that "the mother of young Mularaja, queen Naikidevi, the daughter of Parmardin of Goa, taking her son in her lap, led the Chaulukya army against the Turushkas and defeated them at Gadararaghatta near the foot of Mount Abu. Mularaja II was a minor at that time. Firishta records that the king ofGujarat "advanced with an army to resist the Mohammedans and defeated them with great slaughter. They suffered many hardships before they reached Ghazni." In Sanskrit inscriptions of Gujarat, Mularaja is invariably mentioned as the "conqueror of Garjanakas [dwellers of Ghazni]". One inscription states that "during the reign of Mularaja even a woman could defeat the Hammira [Amir][50].

Ironically, although a state institution like NCERT is trying to undermine the glorious past and traditions of the country, there are numerous foreign historians who have praised the virtues of Indian women.

In a nutshell, the historical records tell us that in India, women had an equitable and honorable position in society. They excelled in different roles which the socio-cultural matrix of the times provided them; whether of a sage or a warrior. And yet, going by the NCERT narrative paints a picture of Indic society in which only oppression and Sati were rampant.

[49] (Travels in The Mogul Empire, pp. 40-41)

[50] (Goel, Heroic Hindu Resistance to Muslim Invaders, p. 24)

CHAPTER 7 Dividing Population into Hostile Groups

For the NCERT authors, India's pluralism and diversity are not symbols of mutual respect and coexistence. They systematically pit one tribe against another, one linguistic group against another and one region against another. The aim is clear — create a heightened sense of identity, which presupposes the other as the enemy. Tribes, communities and groups that have together fought invaders since times immemorial are portrayed as mutually hostile entities. The NCERT narrative ferments exclusion instead of inclusion, opposite to what historical facts describe.

M
aintaining peace and harmony is the duty of every citizen of a country, but it is more so for those who are considered intellectuals of society as they set its discourse.

Plurality, an innate quality of nature, is applicable to human society also. It must be celebrated. But it can be inverted and depicted as a cause of antagonism by protraying it as hostility. That's exactly what NCERT books are designed to achieve.

Peaceful co-existence is possible by focusing on the collective heritage and emphasising the common threads of various sections of society. In a nation as large and as variegated as India, it is easy to disrupt the delicate social fabric; which has endured for an unbroken history spanning millennia.
To disrupt the social cohesion and balance, the colonial strategy was to sow the seeds of discontentment, create artificial fissures or widen the ones that already existed. Once such fault lines are created, the dynamics of identitypolitics take over. There are always elements in each section or community, who are willing to assume the role of community leaders on the basis of a different identity. As a result, a new, socially-disruptive movement takes birth. The opportunist leaders thrive on the differences that may be imaginary, but should 'appear to be real'. The identity politics uses such "differences" as fodder, and clamour for a different and mutually imcompatible status.

The NCERT books, like the British imperialists, create such fault lines, and build these up to turn cultural and social differences into mutually antagonistic social groups. The NCERT authors depict various social, linguistic and culturalIndic constituents as antagonistic or subservient to 'Brahminical hegemony'. They gloss over the fact that these constituents express the in-built plurality and flexibility of the Indic social landscape.

We read in previous chapters how NCERT history textbooks use colonial constructs like ‘race’ and ‘caste’ to sow seeds of division in the young and impressionable minds of school students. In this chapter, we will examine how the NCERT authors employ the colonial constructs of “tribes” and “tribal religions” to further slice and divide the Indic society into mutually hostile groups.

Inception of the tribal divisions

Ever since the arrival of Christian missionaries in India, there have been continuous efforts to present its population as consisting of fragments, at war with each other. This effort was institutionalised by the British. Census was one of the institutions British created and used for this purpose. The colonial masters, at first, tried to establish these artificial fault lines by creating and defining nonexisting categories of population, like animists. The aim of such artificial labels was to disintegrate the Indian society, and to present a large section of Indian population as ‘not Hindu’. But, as the British learned from their practical interaction with the Indic society, it was not easy. Millennia-old culture and religion were so much ingrained in the collective psyche of Indians that the intended fragmentation was not a cakewalk. One problem with this tactic was highlighted in the census report of 1901. It states:–

“The dividing line between Hinduism and Animism is uncertain. Hinduism does not, like Christianity and Islam, demand of its votaries the rejection of all other religious beliefs[1].

When this failed, the second phrase coined to create and foster division was ‘tribal religions’. As a result, the term ‘animism’was removed from census records and a new term ‘tribal religions’ was introduced. But, how faulty and

misleading it was, can also be inferred from Imperial Gazetteer of India, volume 10, 1931:–

“The Hinduism of the Central Provinces is largely tinctured bynature and animal worship and by the veneration of deified human beings. Even in the more advanced districts there are usually a number of village gods, for the worship of whom a special priest belonging to the primitive tribes called Bhumka or Baiga is supported by contributions from the villagers. Khermata, the goddess of the earth or the village, Marhai Devi, the goddess of cholera, Sitala Devi, the goddess of small pox, Nagdeo, the cobra, Bainsa sur, the buffalo, Dulha Deo, a young bridegroom who was killed bya digger, Hardaul, a young Rajput prince who was poisoned by his brother on

[1] (Missionaries in India, p. 189)
suspicion of loving his wife, and Bhilat, a deified cowherd, are the most common of these[2].”

Who were they fighting?

Today, the colonial masters are gone, but it seems the authors of NCERT books are trapped in a time warp. They share a colonial mindset, projecting the same artificial constructs onthe Indiansociety. They use their power to dictate the same divisive narrative through history textbooks to the unsuspecting children. In their view:—

“There were, however, other kinds of societies as well. Many societies in the subcontinent did not follow the social rules and rituals prescribed bythe Brahmans. Nor were theydivided into numerous unequal classes. Such societies are often called tribes.”

NCERT, class 7th, p 91

This is a devious way of saying that those who are labelled as ‘tribes’ do not belong to the Hindu traditions. Creating such artificial fault lines is not the onlydiabolical purpose for which these textbooks are being used. These fault lines are then further widened by emphasising ‘different’ identities. The best way to achieve this is to poison young minds with the notion of imaginaryconflicts. The next page states:—

“Sometimes theyclashed with the more powerful caste-based societies...but the caste-based and tribal societies also depended on each other for their diverse needs.”

NCERT, class 7th, p 92

Nowhere in the historical records do we find any such ‘clashes’, therefore, we requested (through RTI application) the NCERT experts to provide us a copy of all such instances that show that

[2] (Imperial Gazetteer of India, 1931, volume 10, p. 27)

‘they clashed with the more powerful caste-based societies’. The answer was the standard one-liner: “We do not have any such record”.

Anyway, the written records do show clashes with powerful societies. The powerful entities with which they clashed were the foreign invaders. In fact, it was the cruel behavior of invaders that led toproliferationofnumerous “tribes” during medievaltimes. When Islamised Arabs and Turks started invading India, their modus operandi was to kill all able-bodied males and enslave women and children to be sold into slave markets thriving in the Islamic world. The bigger urban centres and forts could stand their ground, but in the countryside, villagers were ill-equipped to put up a fight. Therefore, wherever they got prior information of such raids, they evacuated the village and took shelter in the thick jungles or mountains. In this way, they could avoid getting killed, but they had to adapt to a life that was different from the mainstream and more suitable to their new environs. The thick jungles provided considerable security from the tormentors. Cut off from others, they had to resort to a lifestyle that was later on labelled as “tribal” by British colonialists.

How cunningly NCERT books hide this aspect of our history will be evident from the following example:
“Ibn Battuta, a fourteenth century traveller from Morocco,
Africa, explained that *chieftains* sometimes fortified
themselves in mountains, in rocky, uneven and rugged places
as well as in bamboo groves. In India the bamboo is not

hollow; it is big. Its several parts are so intertwined that even fire cannot affect them, and theyare on the whole verystrong. The *chieftains* live in these forests which serve them as ramparts, inside which are their cattle and their crops. There is also water for them within, that is, rain water which collects there. Hence they cannot be subdued except by powerful armies, who entering these forests, cut down the bamboos with specially prepared instruments."
NCERT, class 7th, p 40

The NCERT authors keep it simple here – they keep the paragraph same, but play a propagandist trick by changing one word only — 'kafir'. These small changes, and several such instances of dishonesty, can alter the meaning of the entire narrative. The truth is that Ibn Batuta was describing the heroism of Indians and the difficulty that invaders were facing in exterminating and subduing them. The original text, which also explains the context that the NCERT authors craftily obfuscate:–

"InHindustan, Kafirs and Musalmans dwellinmixed localities and Musalmans have overpowered them. Alarge number of Kafirs live in unapproachable mountains and uneven and rugged places as well as in bamboo groves. In India the bamboo is not hollow; it is big. Its several parts are so intertwined that even fire cannot affect them, and they are on the whole very strong. The Kafirs live in these forests which serve them as ramparts, inside which are their cattle and their crops. There is also water for them within, that is, rain water which collects there. Hence they cannot be defeated except by powerful armies, who entering these forests, cut down the bamboos with specially prepared instruments[3]."

By removing the first part of the quote and by replacing the word 'Kafir'with 'chieftain', all the despotism and barbarity of invaders is sanitised. This twisting of words is used togive anentirelydifferent meaning to the narrative. This twisting is so subtle that unless one

[3] (Tughlaq Kalin Bharat, p. 238)

matches the words and context with the original, the distortion is hard to detect.

Likewise, the brazen manner in which the struggle of Mews against the barbaric rule of Sultans is twisted to entirelysubvert the narrative will put many professional spin-doctors to shame. Mews of the area surrounding the environs of Delhi, currently called Mewatis, were so enraged at the alien rule of Sultans that they resorted to harassing the army of Sultans. They steadfastly refused to convert to Islam, thereby inviting the wrath of the Sultans. They preferred to live on the outskirts of the city, in dense jungles, instead of submitting to the alien rulers. Before looking at the historical records, let us notice sleight of hand used by NCERT authors:—

"The first set of campaigns along the "internal frontier" of the Sultanate aimed at consolidating the hinterlands of the garrison towns. During these campaigns, forests were cleared in the Ganga Yamuna doab and hunter gatherers and pastoralists expelled from their habitat. These lands were given to peasants and agriculture was encouraged."

NCERT, class 7th, p 34

In the above passage, the NCERT books are alluding to the policies of Sultans, starting from Balban to Tughluq. They are 'educating' our children that the Sultans promoted agricultural practices. The truthis, however, veryghastly. Let us look at the historical records:—

"Towards the end of the first year of his reign he employed himself inharrying the jungles, and in routing out the Miwattis, whom no one had interfered with since the days of Shamsud din…… The daring of the Miwattis in the neighborhood of Delhi was carried to such an extent that the western gates of the city were shut at afternoon prayer, and no one dared to go out of the city in that direction after that hour… In the year of his accession, the Sultan felt the repression of the Miwattis to be the first of his duties, and for a whole year he was occupied in overthrowing them and in scouring the jungles, which he effectually accomplished. Great numbers of Miwattis were put to the sword[4]."

As for the term 'These lands were given to peasants and agriculture was encouraged', the truthis best explained in the words ofZiauddin Barani, as he explains further:—

“The Sultan built a fort at Gopal-gir, and established several posts in the vicinity of the city, which he placed in the charge ofAfghans, with assignments of land (for their maintenance). In this campaign one hundred thousand of the royal army were slain by the Miwattis.

After the Sultan had thus routed out the Miwattis, and cleared away the jungle in the neighbourhood of the city, he gave the towns and country within the Doab to some distinguished chiefs, with directions to lay waste and destroy the villages of the marauders, to slay the men, to make prisoners of the women and children, to clear awaythe jungle, and to suppress all lawless proceedings. The noblemen set about the work with strong forces, and they soon put down the daring of the rebels. They scoured the jungles and drove out the rebels, and the ryots were brought into submission and obedience.

The Sultan afterwards marched out twice to open the roads to Hindustan, and proceeded to the neighbourhood of Kampil and Pattiali….so the Sultan erected in these places three strong forts, in which he placed Afghan garrisons….In this campaign he also repaired the fort of Jalali, which he

[4] (Barani, pp. 103-106)
garrisoned with Afghans, and appropriated the land of the place to its support.

While the Sultan was engaged in these duties news arrived from Kateher that disturbances had broken out in that district… In two nights and three days he crossed the Ganges at Kateher, and sending forward a force of five thousand archers, he gave them orders to burn down Kateher and destroy it, to slay every man, and to spare none but women and children, not even boys who had reached the age of eight or nine years. He remained for some days at Kateher and directed the slaughter. The blood of the rioters ran in streams, heaps of slain were to be seen near every village and jungle, and the stench of the dead reached as far as the Ganges. This severity spread dismay among the rebels and manysubmitted. The whole district was ravaged, and so much plunder was made that the royal army was enriched, and the people of Badaun even were satisfied. Woodcutters were sent out tocut roads through the jungles, and the armypassing along these brought the Hindus to

submission. From that time unto the end of the glorious reign no rebellion made head in Kateher, and the countries of Badaun, Amroha, Sambal, and Kanwari continued safe from the violence and turbulence of the people of Kateher[5]."

The historical records bear testimony to the fact that it was not only Mewatis, but all sections of the Indian society that fought against the hordes ofinvadingArabs,Turks and Mughals with all their might. Manycommunities labelled todayas scheduled castes and scheduled tribes were in fact those relentless fighters who did not submit to the Muslim rule for a very long time. The Islamic armies found

[5] (ibid, pp. 103-106)

them considerably difficult to control; therefore, any Muslim commander or king who could subdue them was praised by the chroniclers. This is how a court chronicler gloats over the success of Sher Khan, an army commander and a cousin of Sultan Balban, in subjugating different Hindu communities: —

"Sher Khan *had coerced and brought under his control the Jats, the Khokhars, the Bhattis, the Minas, the Mandahars, and other, similar tribes*; he had also shown himself able to give a good account of the Mughals. The nobles who succeeded him in his territories were unequal to these duties;[6]"

As is evident from the above extract, all the 'tribes' fought against the invaders. This was a war lasting for centuries, perhaps the longest struggle in world history. NCERT 'historians'expunge from history textbooks any mention of this inspiring struggle of Indian people against the foreign invaders. Instead, an attempt is made to create an image that the struggle of "tribes" was against the "castebased society"; and, to prove, albeit byimplication, that local "tribes" had affinity for Muslim rulers.

Khokhars

The community of Khokhars, another thriving Hindu community of North Western frontier of undivided India, was arch enemies of all these foreign invaders. NCERT authors assign them a significant role in the 'thirteenth and

fourteenth centuries', which is gross injustice to their illustrious history.At numerous occasions theyfought as a Hindu armyand the Muslim chroniclers wrote them as 'enemies of Islam'. When Mahmud Ghazni invaded during the eleventh century, we find Khokhars fighting in the army ofAnandpal.

[6] (TarikheFiroz Shahi, pp. 108-109)

Excerpt from Cambridge History "Mahmud pursued his way through the Punjab, plundering the country as he advanced. The defeat of Anandpal and Mahmud's triumphal and devastating progress overcame the

resolution of Daud, who shut himself up in Multan, and when Mahmud prepared to form the siege of the city offered as the price of peace a yearly tribute of 20,000 golden dirhams and abjuration of his heretical doctrines. The invasion of his northern province by the Turks of Transoxiana underAbu'lHusain Nasr I of Bukhara obliged Mahmud to accept these terms, and he returned with all speed towards the Oxus, appointing as governor of Und, by which place he marched, Sukhpal, a grandson of Jaipal, who, having been taken prisoner with his grandfather, had accepted Islam, and was now known as Nawasa Shah. We are not concerned with the details of Mahmud's campaign against the Ilak Khan, who was defeated and driven across the Oxus, but it is an interesting fact that a corps of Indians formed part of the victorious army.

On his return towards Ghazni in 1007 Mahmud learnt that Nawasa Shah had apostatised, was expelling the subordinate Muslim officers from the district committed to his charge, and purposed to rule it either as an independent sovereign or as the vassal of his uncle, Anandpal. He marched at once towards Hind and ordered those of his officers whose fiefs lay near that district to attack the renegade. They captured Nawasa Shah and the treasure which he had amassed and carried him before Mahmud, who confiscated his wealth and imprisoned him in a fortress for the remainder of his life.

In the following year Mahmud resolved further to chastise Anandpal for his opposition to the passage of the Muslim army through his dominions on its way to Multan, and in the autumn of 1008 marched to Peshawar. Anandpal,

who had been aware of his intention, had appealed for aid to other Hindu rajas, and one historian mentions the rajas of Ujjain, Gwalior, Kalinjar, Kanauj, Delhi, andAjmer as having either marched in person or sent troops to his assistance. The number and consequence of his allies are perhaps exaggerated, but it is evident from Mahmud's excessive caution thatAnandpal had received a considerable accession of strength and that the army which he led into the field was a very different force from that which Mahmud had so easily brushed aside on his way to Multan. *Among the most valuable of Anandpal's auxiliaries were the wild and warlike Khokars from the lower hills of Kashmir*. The Hindu army was encamped between Sind and Peshawar, and Mahmud lay in camp before it for forty days without venturing to attack it, although each day's delay brought it fresh reinforcements and the only inconvenience which it suffered arose from the difficulty of provisioning so great a force. This was alleviated bythe devotion of the men's wives, who sold their jewels to enable their husbands to keep the field.

Mahmud protected his flanks with entrenchments and instead of following his usual impetuous tactics strove to entice the enemy to attack him in his own strong position. In this he succeeded and the Hindus attacked on December 31. *A force of 30,000 Khokars*, bareheaded and barefooted and armed with strange weapons, charged both his flanks simultaneously, passed over his trenches, and did such execution among his troops that he was meditating a retreat when a fortunate accident decided the day in his favour[7]."

[7] (Cambridge History of India, volume 3, p. 15)

In fact, the Muslim invaders were least bothered whether their opponents were Khokhars or Gakhars.Tothem, theywere all infidels, to be either killed or converted. Probably, that's why we find them mixing up the two in their chronicles. When Hassan Nizami, a historian contemporaneous with Qutubuddin Aibak wrote about Khokhars in his workTaj ul Maasiri, to him, theywere just wretched infidels.

“Upon this, the tribe of Kokars (Gakkhurs) (Allah annihilate them!) said that from anyone who had the least knowledge and sense, it could not be concealed that if the sacred person of the Sultan had been alive, the like of these transactions could never have been done byAibak Bak, and that therefore the great king had exchanged his throne of empire for one of dust, and had departed from the house of mortality to the world of holiness. In consequence of these impressions, seditious thoughts entered the brains of the Hindus, and the madness of independence and dominion affected the heads of Bakan and Sarki, the chiefs of the Kokars, who thrust their heads out of the collar of obedience, and opened their hands for the destruction of villages and the plunder of cattle, and kindled the flames of turbulence… When these circumstances were reported to Muhammad Ghori, he determined on proceeding to the scene of action, and sent on theAmir Hajib, Siraju-d dinAbu Bakr, one of his confidential servants, to inform Kutbu-d din of his intentions…. The Kokars were completely defeated, and, “in that country there remained not an inhabitant to light a fire.” “Much spoil in slaves and weapons, beyond all enumeration, fell into the possession of the victors.” One of the sons of the Kokar Rai, the chief instigator of these hostilities, rushed into the river with “a detachment of his Satanical followers, and fled with one horse from the field of battle to a fort on the hill of Jud, and having escaped the sword, threw into it the last breathings of a dying man[8].”

This explodes the myth being assiduously built up by NCERT that the foreign invaders were some kind of saviours who rescued the downtrodden sections, and those sections of society were fed up of the “unequal social order’of “orthodox Hinduism”.

“On the other hand, many dominant tribes of Punjab, Sind and the North-West frontier had adopted Islam quite early. Theycontinued to reject the caste system. The unequal social order, prescribed by orthodox Hinduism, was not widely accepted in these areas.”

NCERT, class 7th, p 92

In stark contrast to the contentions of NCERT, the Islamic authors are found lamenting the fact that everywhere in Hindustan, there is aversion to Muslims and the moment the new converts get a chance, they not only revert back to Hinduism but shed all the signs of Islamic creed, as we have already seen in the case of Sukhpal, grandson of Jaipal styled as Nawasa Shah. The erudite Al-Beruni traces the reasons for animosity between local population and Isalmic invaders:—

"Nasir-addaula Sabuktagin. This prince chose the holy war (Jihad) as his calling, and therefore called himselfAl-ghazi (i.e. warring on the road of Allah). In the interest of his successors he constructed, in order to weaken the Indian frontier, those roads on which afterwards his son Yaminaddaula Mahmud marched into India during a period of thirty years and more. God be merciful to both father and son! Mahmud utterly ruined the prosperity of the country, and

[8] (Nizami, pp. 232-236)

performed there wonderful exploits, by which the Hindus became like atoms of dust scattered in all directions, and like a tale of old in the mouth of the people. Their scattered remains cherish, of course, the most inveterate aversion towards all Muslims. This is the reason, too, why Hindu sciences have retired far awayfrom those parts of the country conquered by us, and have fled to places which our hand cannot yet reach, to Kashmir, Benares, and other places. And there the antagonism between them and all foreigners receives more and more nourishment both from political and religious sources[9]."

Depicting Gonds and Ahoms as non-Hindus

The idea that tribals are non-Hindu is repeated ad nauseum by NCERT authors to stress that a large section of population was detached from Hindu society. Some statement or expression to such effect appears after every few pages.

"Their basically equal society gradually got divided into unequal social classes. Brahmanas received land grants from Gond rajas and became more influential. The Gond chiefs now wished to be recognised as Rajputs."

NCERT, class 7th, p 98

Same dated colonial trick. Try to portray that Gonds were different from Hindus. The colonial masters failed in this endeavor, but the NCERT authors have a much softer target: gullible children.

Let us see how the census officers reacted when they came face to face with the integral unityof all sections of the Indian population. When the officials were asked to classify Gonds, Bhils and other "tribes" as non-Hindu, the officials report:

[9] (Kitabul Hind, vol 1, p. 22)

"The Census returns of 1901 reckon the number ofAnimists at about 8.5 millions. The method employed was to class as Hindus or Muhammadans persons who named these as their religions; the remainder or those who classed their religion as tribal, say that of Gonds or Bhils, were recorded as Animists. *Such a classification is of no practical value,* simplybecause it ignores the fact that the fundamental religion of the majority of the people – Hindu, Buddhist, or even Muslamman – is mainlyAnimistic.

… But in the absence of literary evidence, we may suspect that the animistic current runs through the whole course of Indian religious history, that the Vedas may have been confined to the priestly class, and that from the beginning of things the common folk may have adored the monkey and snake, or the stone which they supposed to embody their gods. Indeed the Vedic religion was Animism of the higher kind, as is shown by the worship of the heavenly bodies and the powers of Nature, each of which was believed to be controlled by some indwelling spirit.[10]"

Also worth noting in the above British report is the fact that the forced conversions at the hands of the Muslim invaders, from Mahmud in the tenth century to Tipu in the eighteenth, failed to wean away converts from their Hindu traditions. They were technically Muslims, but did not abandon their reverence of the elements of nature, which is ingrained in the Indian psyche.

NCERT uses missionary approach towards Indic religions, and ignores their inherent plurality and reverence for nature. Unlike Abrahamic religions, which compel people to follow one particular god, the Indic worldview is comfortable with a multitude of gods.

[10] (Imperial Gazetteer of Easter Bengal and Assam, 1931, p. 432)

But NCERT uses the prism of Abrahamic cosmology to interpret Indian society. Whenever they notice differences in modes of worship or names of god, they label it as a different religion. Continuing with their divisive agenda, their next aim to extract the Ahoms out of the Hindu way of life, and present them as distinct from Hinduism:—

"Originally, the Ahoms worshipped their own tribal gods. During the first half of the seventeenth century, however, the influence of Brahmanas increased. Temples and Brahmanas were granted land by the king. In the reign of Sib Singh, Hinduism became the predominant religion. But the Ahom kings did not completely give up their traditional beliefs after adopting Hinduism…Over a period oftime, many of them (tribes) merged with caste-based society. Others. however, rejected both the caste system and orthodox Hinduism." NCERT, class 7th, p 92

If one trusts the yarn of NCERT, when it comes to Hindus and Brahmans, the purpose of every action is always sinister. On the other hand all alien creeds are projected in association with 'virtue words'. It is clear that the NCERT historians are falsely trying to project Hinduism as a religion having foreign origin, which spread through craft and deceit of Brahmans. On the other hand, Islam and Christianity, originating from West Asia, are depicted as better options, which were easily accepted on their arrival in India.

Hinduism is generallyassociated with negative words like 'rejected' and others are always accompanied with positive words like 'appealed'.

"Muhammad was to found a communityof believers (umma) bound by a common set of religious beliefs. The community would bear witness (shahada) to the existence of the religion before God as well as before members of other religious communities. Muhammad's message particularly

appealed to those Meccans who felt deprived of the gains from trade and religion and were looking for a new community identity. Those who accepted the doctrine were called Muslims."

NCERT, class 11th, p 79

The emphasis of NCERT books is exactly opposite to historical facts. While there are no references or records ofAhoms or Gonds ever being out of fold of Hinduism, we find overwhelming historical evidence about rejection of Islam not onlyin India, but also inArabia and other countries.

Before Muhammad, prophet of Islam, went to settle in Medina, he went to another city called Taif. The residents of this city, like the citizens ofMecca, were open-minded and polytheistic intheir outlook. What transpired there is best explained in his biography:—

"They had a Lat, or chief idol, of their own. It might be possible, by appealing to their tribal pride as well as conscience, to enlist them on the side of Islam against the people of Mecca. Mahomet went first to the three principal men of the city, brothers; and, having explained his mission, invited them to the honour of sustaining the new faith, and supporting him in the face of his hostile tribe.

But he failed in producing conviction. They cast in his teeth the common objections of his own people, and advised him to seek protection in some other quarter.

Mahomet remained inTayif for about ten days. Though many influential men came at his call, no hopeful impression was made. Thus repulsed, he solicited one favour; that they would not divulge the object of his visit, for he feared on his return the taunts and aggravated hostility of the Coreish. But this, even if it had been possible, the men of Tayif were little likelyto concede. For the first few days, perhaps, the common people regarded with awe the prophet who had turned Mecca upside down, and whose preaching probably most of them had heard at some of the neighbouring fairs or at the yearly pilgrimage. But the neglect manifested by their chiefs, and the disproportion to outward eye between the magnitude of the prophet's claims

and his present solitaryhelpless condition, turned fear into contempt. Stirred up to hasten the departure of the unwelcome visitor, the people hooted him through the streets, pelted him with stones, and at last obliged him to flee the city pursued by a relentless rabble. Blood flowed from both his legs; and Zeid, endeavouring to shield him, was wounded in the head. The mob did not desist until they had chased him two or three miles across the sandy plain to the foot of the surrounding hills. There, wearied and mortified, he took refuge in one of the numerous orchards, and rested under a vine[11]."

In Mecca, the birth place of Islamic prophet, the rejection of Islam, its doctrine and prophet was so intense that Muhammad had to shift his base to Medina. As for the assertion of NCERT regarding the profile of those who accepted new religion, there is no such historical evidence.

Land grants: tools of Islamisation

Another aspect of NCERT books is that whenever the topics of discussion are Brahmans and Hinduism, there is no higher motive involved. They are just out to increase influence and take control. But, when it comes to Abrahamic religions, every action is either sacrosanct or is just not disclosed to the students. Not a single word

[11] (Muir, 1894, pp. 105-106)

is used to explain the reason for a disproportionately large number of mosques and churches in our country. Historical facts testify that the Sultans and Mughals used state machinery to propagate their own creed and crush the religious feelings of majority of the population they were ruling.

"Among the gifts which God bestowed upon me, His humble servant, was a desire to erect public buildings. So I built many mosques and colleges and monasteries, that the learned and the elders, the devout and the holy, might worship God in these edifices, and aid the kind builder with their prayers. The digging of canals, the planting of trees, and the endowing with lands are in accordance with the directions of the Law. The learned doctors of the Law of Islam have manytroubles; of this there is no doubt. I settled allowances upon them in proportion to their necessary expenses, so that they might

regularly receive the income. The details of this are fully set forth in the Wakf-nama[12]."

Separate institutions like Wakf were created to propagate the exogenous creed, but if we go by NCERT books, it were the Indic traditions that were culprits and transgressors everywhere.

Perverting the legacy of Birsa Munda

On the onset of the sixteenth century, the Indic population was facing another challenge: the missionaries. This foe posed a different kind of challenge. Christianity, as an ideology, is older than Islam, and this head start, combined with its years of war with Islam, armed the missionaries with more deceptive tactics designed for conversions. They have mastered the art of inculturation— the crafty technique of delinking a society from its roots and planting Christianity in its place. One of their targets was the section of population they had labelled as tribals. Those who were gullible fell [12]
(Futuhati Firoz Shahi, p. 382)

to the mechanisations of missionaries, but more alert ones, those who found them loathsome, offered resistance to missionaries and the Christian British occupiers. One such leader was Birsa Munda of the Munda community. He and his family were forced to convert to Christianityin order to give Birsa admission to a German Mission School at Burj (present dayWest Singhbhum district in Jharkhand). His name was changed to Birsa David. But, when he realised the devastating effect that the conversions were having on the lives of tribals, he rebelled and the entire family surrendered their membership ofGerman mission, thus renouncing Christianity. Under his leadership, the tribals rose against the twin evils of British occupation and their missionary agents. But the NCERT authors conveniently twist the facts and again invert the reality. They try to present this rebellion as one opposed to Christianity as well as Hinduism.

"But we must remember that Birsa also turned against missionaries and Hindu landlords....what worried British officials most was the political aim of the Birsa movement, for it wanted to drive out missionaries, moneylenders, Hindu landlords, and the government...the land policies ofthe

British were destroying their traditional land system, Hindu landlords and moneylenders were taking over their land."

NCERT, class 8th, p 48 By clubbing the words 'Hindu landlords', an impression is being created as if Birsa Munda had animosity towards Hinduism as well as Christianity. Using this ingenuity, the NCERT books might claim that Bhagat Singh was against Britishers as well as their Hindu, Sikh and Muslim employees.
The truth, however, is that Birsa was a staunch Hindu. A major change came in the life ofyoung Birsa when he met famous Vaishnav Anand Pandey. Then on he started wearing Yajnopveet, the sacred thread which Hindus wear on their torso. He started worshipping Tulsi plant and gave up eating meat. He also started a movement for ban on cow slaughter. What the NCERT authors, intheir wisdom, omit is that the entire movement that he started had twin aims: to uproot Christianity and British rule.

Slicing off Alvars, Nayanars and Lingayats
The cultural matrix of Indic traditions is such that nothing is etched in stone. There is no final word of a prophet or messiah. Like everything natural, the socio-cultural milieu is in a state of flux. If someone feels or experiences a new path to enlightenment or even a new way of life, he or she is free to do so. As a result, we have a vast plurality of sects and *sampradays*. Every now and then a new sect starts, thrives and then becomes a part of the pluralistic society. Such new paths or sects have some differences (which may be sometimes very sharp) and at the same time are comfortable with existence of others according to the dictum 'live and let live'. No one goes out to kill or convert on the basis of superior military strength. The creation of such new sects is never accompanied by burning of books or libraries.

Instead of appreciating this multi-cultural aspect of our heritage, the NCERT authors are creating a perception in which such sects and movements are depicted to be reactionary or revolting.

"ATTITUDES TOWARDS CASTE – Some historians *suggest* that the Alvars and Nayanars initiated a movement of protest against the caste system and the dominance of Brahmanas or *at least* attempted to reform the

system. To *some extent* this is *corroborated* by the fact that bhaktas hailed from diverse social backgrounds ranging from Brahmanas to artisans and cultivators and even from castes considered 'untouchable'."

NCERT, class 12th, p 144 In utter disregard to the ethics of history telling, the authors use more of fiction than facts. By using terms like 'some historians' or 'suggest that it was a protest movement' or 'at least' an attempt to 'reform the system', they sound more like a pathetic door-to-door salesman— desperate to sell his wares— than a historian. The text is carefully worded to exaggerate the differences of Alvars and Nayanars with respect to Hinduism. It is portrayed as if the two communities were pitted against Hinduism although the traditions and the broad-minded outlook of both these are in line with the broad Indic worldview. Asimilar tactic is used to portray Lingayats as a sect opposed to Hinduism.

If at all, the entire gamut of practices prevalent in all these sects is in contrast with the exclusivism associated with the Abrahamic faiths.

Source 1

The *chaturvedin* (Brahmana versed in the four Vedas) and the "outcaste"

This is an excerpt from a composition of an Alvar named Tondaradippodi, who was a Brahmana:

You (Vishnu) manifestly like

those "servants" who express their love for your feet,

though they may be born outcastes, more than

the *Chaturvedins* who are strangers and without allegiance to your service.

➲ Do you think Tondaradippodi was opposed to the caste system?

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Source 2

Shastras or devotion?

This is a verse composed by Appar, a Nayanar saint:

O rogues who quote the law books,

Of what use are your *gotra* and *kula*?

Just bow to Marperu's lord (Shiva who resides in Marperu, in Thanjavur, Tamil Nadu) as your sole refuge.

➲ Are there any similarities or differences in the attitudes of Tondaradippodi and Appar towards Brahmanas?

© not to

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The

above texts and the attached questions, loaded with antiBrahmanical ideas, are depicted at numerous places by NCERT experts.

When we study and observe the multiplicityof ideologies or strands of philosophy that originated in India, this in itself is an indication of some difference of opinion. Otherwise, there would be no need for a new perspective or *sampraday*. Gautam Buddh, Mahavir, Basavanna, Nanak, etc. are associated with initiation of new sects that still survive, even thrive, within our society. It is proof of the multiculturalism embedded inthe outlookofIndiansociety.Whenever differences arose, they were, generally, resolved on the basis of intellectual discussion and discourses. The hoarytraditions of 'Poorv Paksh', 'Siddhant Paksh' and 'Uttar Paksh' have been even recorded by Al-Beruni. He witnessed the iconoclasm and monoculturalism of Islam in which other ideologies were rejected outright and its followers condemned. He found the traditions of Hindustan strange as compared to what he had been used to back home.

"Theytotallydiffer from us in religion, as we believe in nothing in which they believe, and vice versa. On the whole, there is very little disputing about theological topics among themselves; at the utmost, they fight with words, but, they will never stake their soulor bodyor their propertyon religious controversy[13]."

When Christian missionaries were using dubious means to convert unsuspecting Hindus, Raja Rammohun Roy reprimanded them in his forthright manner and challenged them for a debate instead of trying underhand tactics for proselytisation. In the NCERT books, he is presented as a reformer protesting against the poor treatment to Hindu women. His name is especially associated with his campaign against Sati Pratha. But, he was much more than that. He was a learned man and had a thorough knowledge of Christianity. In his formative years he was very much impressed by this creed,

[13] (Kitabul Hind,vol 1, p. 19)

but was soon disillusioned. Let us look at the manner in which he is portrayed by NCERT authors:—

“From the early nineteenth century, we find debates and discussions about social customs and practices taking on a new character...these debates were often initiated by Indian reformers and reform groups. One such reformer was Raja Rammohun Roy.”
NCERT, class 8th, p 109

This much is true on the part of NCERT, what they hide is that most of his debates were against missionaries. In the very first issue of his bilingual magazine ‘The Brahmanical Magazine’, he made a scathing attack on missionaries:—

During the last twenty years, a body of English gentlemen, who are called missionaries, have been publiclyendeavoring, in several ways, to convert Hindus and Mussalmans of this country into Christianity. The first way is that of publishing and distributing among the natives various books, large and small, reviling both religions and abusing and ridiculing the gods and saints of the former: the second way is that of standing in front of the doors of the natives or in the public roads to preach the excellency of their own religion and the debasedness of that of others: the third way is that if any natives of low origin become Christians from the desire of gain or from anyother motives, these gentlemen employ and maintain them as a necessary encouragement to others to follow their example... Were the missionaries likewise to preach the Gospel and distribute books in countries not conquered bythe English, such as Turkey, Persia, etc., which are much nearer England, they would be esteemed a body of men truly zealous in propagating religion and in following the example of the founders of Christianity. In Bengal, where the English are the sole rulers, and where the mere name of Englishman is sufficient to frighten people, an encroachment upon the rights of her poor, timid and humble inhabitants and upon their religion cannot be viewed in the eyes of God or the public as a justifiable act. For wise and good men always feel disinclined to hurt those that are of much less strength than themselves, and if such weak creatures be dependent on them and subject to their authority, theycan never attempt, even in thought, to mortify their feelings[14].”

He was aware of the fact that the missionaries were having undue advantage in converting Hindus due to the might of British Raj supporting them; without the power of bayonets, they won't be able to withstand a discussion based on logic and reasoning. He challenged them for a debate. In his own words:—

To abuse and insult, is inconsistent with reason and justice. If by force of argument they can prove the truth of their own religion and falsity of that of Hindus, many would of course, embrace their doctrines, and in case they fail to prove this, theyshould not undergo such useless trouble to tease Hindus any longer by their attempts at conversion. They should not abstain from a debate considering the humble way of living of Brahmin scholars because Truth and Virtue do not necessarily belong to wealth and Power and Distinctions of Big Mansions[15]."

Yet, none of this finds its way into our history books. He believed in the inherent superiorityofHindu scriptures, therefore, was not scared of throwing a challenge, which was in line with the hoary legacy of

[14] (Quoted in History of Hindu Christian Encounters by Sita Ram Goel, pp 49-50)
[15] (Ibid p. 51)

discussions to sort out differences. Instead of highlighting this legacy of our country, the eminent historians make every effort to portray the ancient Indian society as being full of hostility.

"RELATIONS WITH THE STATE – Interestingly, one of the major themes inTamilbhaktihymns is the poets'opposition to Buddhism and Jainism. This is particularly marked in the compositions of the Nayanars. Historians have *attempted to explain* this hostility by *suggesting* that it was due to competition between members of other religious traditions for royal patronage. What is evident is that the powerful Chola rulers (ninth to thirteenth centuries) supported Brahmanical and bhakti traditions, making land grants and constructing temples for Vishnu and Shiva."

NCERT, class 12th, p 145

This passage implies that Buddhism and Jainism had a tough time at the hands of rulers and Brahmans, who were averse to both these ideologies; and it was despite such hostilities that these two strands survived. In fact, this passage might suggest that it was this bigoted treatment, which Buddhism and Jainism allegedly received from Brahmans and kings, is responsible for relativelyless adherents of these two sects.

The historical facts stand testimony to the largesse bestowed upon both these benign ideologies by various Indian kings. The Chinese traveller Fa Xian has given a vivid account of the veneration with which successive Indian kings treated Buddhist monks for centuries.

"After Buddha attained to pari-nirvana the kings of the various countries and the heads of the Vaisyas built viharas for the priests, and endowed them with fields, houses, gardens, and orchards, along with the resident populations and their cattle, the grants being engraved on plates of metal, sothat afterwards they were handed down from king to king, without any one daring to annul them, and they remain even to the present time[16]."

It is noteworthy, that this Chinese pilgrim is writing about these facts nearly a thousand years after the times of Buddh. Although the NCERT authors are very vocal and verbose in demonising Brahmans and ancient kings by falselyaccusing them of 'opposing' Buddhism, but theyare silent regarding the true cause of annihilation of Buddhism, which was flourishing in vast territories outside India, particularly CentralAsia and South-EastAsia, before the advent of Islam.

To further transplant such outlook on unsuspecting children, the NCERT author resorts to gimmickryand insinuations. To guage the extent of their distorted version, we quote an NCERT book at some length:—

"During the same period, in north India deities such as Vishnu and Shiva were worshipped in temples, often built with the support of rulers. However, historians have not found evidence of anything resembling the compositions of the Alvars and Nayanars till the fourteenth century. How do we account for this difference?
Some historians *point out* that in north India this was the period when

several Rajput states emerged. In most of these states Brahmanas occupied positions of importance, performing a range of secular and ritual functions. There *seems to have been* little or no attempt to challenge their position directly. At the same time other religious leaders, who did not function within the orthodox Brahminical framework, were gaining ground. These

[16] (Chinese Literature, The Travels of Fa Hein, p. 230)

included the Naths, Jogis and Siddhas. Many of them came from artisanal groups, including weavers, who were becoming increasingly important with the development of organized craft production. Demand for such production grew with the emergence of new urban centers, and longdistance trade with Central Asia and West Asia."

NCERT, class 12th, p 145

Even a layman, having the rudimentary knowledge of Indian philosophy, knows that Jogi is a colloquial term or a distorted form of Yogi used to denote anyone who practices Yog. Here, the term Yog includes PatanjaliYog, Gyan Yog, Bhakti Yog, GyanYog and Karm Yog. In fact, Bhagwad Gita, which is a part of Mahabharat, explains the symptoms of a Yogi in some detail. Thus, a Yogi is either a Brahman or a follower of, what NCERT authors love to call, 'Brahmanical texts'. Likewise, a Siddha (it should be Siddh actually) is someone who has attained at least one of the eight siddhis, againmentioned in'Brahmanicaltexts'. But, either compelled bytheir own ideologies or those of their political masters, the authors pollutes the content of school books when they try to depict Jogis and Siddhas as people opposed to Brahmans.

Similar fictitious differences are fabricated to present Lingayats as a group at loggerheads with Hindu traditions. One key 'difference' is their support to post-puberty marriages of women, which is purportedly not in sync with 'Brahmanical social order'.

"THE VIRASHAIVA TRADITION IN KARNATAKA – The Lingayats challenged the idea of caste and the "pollution" attributed to certain groups by Brahmanas. They also questioned the theory of rebirth. These won them

followers amongst those who were marginalized within the Brahmanical social order. The Lingayats also encouraged certain practices disapproved in the Dharmashastras, such as post-puberty marriage and the remarriage of widows."

NCERT, class 12th, p 147

Had the authors cared to read Manusmriti a little carefully, they would have observed that the sage has specifically mentioned attainment of puberty a necessary condition for marriage. In fact, he has stated that the marriage of a girl should not take place unless a minimum of three years have elapsed after her maturity. In ninth chapter, sage Manu states—

"When a girl intends to get married, she should wait for three years after she has attained puberty and then in fourth year she can get married[17]."

Likewise, the other point of divergence that has been quoted as a difference between Brahmanical outlook and that of Lingayats is widow remarriage. Here also the authors are found to be intellectually dishonest. When the great activist Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar decided to eradicate this social evil, he took help of 'Brahmanical scriptures' to prove that it was not Hinduism that was responsible for this taboo, but it was merelya social evil. NCERT authors mention him as a reformer, but deliberately withhold this aspect of his movement.

"For instance, one of the most famous reformers, Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar, used the *ancient texts* to suggest that widows could remarry." NCERT, class 8th,p 111

Notice the absence of name of the scripture quoted by the scholar. Ishwar Chandra was trying to establish that the marriage of widows was sanctioned by Hindu scriptures. He had taken the help of Parashar Samhita.

[17] (Manusmriti, p. 766)

"Vidyasagar devoted every spare hour to the study of the Shastras…One night he suddenly lighted upon a passage in *Parashara-Samhita* and shouted

with transport of joy, “I have found it at last!”. He gave it an explanation which supported remarriage. The whole night he composed pamphlet stating his view of the case, quoting that particular passage and commenting upon it[18].”

The NCERT authors seem to have so much bias against Hinduism that they do not want the Hindu scriptures to be associated with anything positive.

A questionthat naturallycrops up inthe minds ofuninformed readers is that if the practice of pre-puberty marriage of girls and widow marriage taboo was not based on the authority of Hindu scriptures, then when and why these practices appeared in society in the first place. The answer to this question can be found in the words of another personage who is mentioned in the current NCERT books. Ramabai is projected as a social reformer in these books, but her explanation of these social evils is suppressed. Ramabai on the topic of *Swaymvar*:—

“One of the most noticeable facts connected with this form is this: women as well as men were quite free to choose their own future spouses. In Europe andAmerica women do choose their husbands, but it is considered a shame for a woman to be the first to request marriage, and both men and women will be shocked equally at such an occurrence; but in India, women had equal freedom in this case at least. A woman might, without being put to shame, and without shocking the other party, come forward and select her own husband. The Svayamvara (selecting husband) was quite

[18] (Roy, 1921, pp. 47-49)

common until as late as the eleventh century, A. D., and even now, although very rarely, this custom is practiced by a few people.
The lawless behaviour of the Mahomedan intruders from the twelfth century, A. D., had much to do in universalizing infant marriage in India[19].”

Ramabai’s father was a devout Brahman and had imparted knowledge of Hindu scriptures to his daughter, as best as he could. He died when Ramabai was still a teenager, therefore, she might not have had command over the vast corpus of Hindu scriptures, but she had sufficient knowledge to be sure

that the social evils are not based on sanction of Hindu scriptures. According to her biographer Helen Dyer:—

"RAMABAI'S position in her widowed state differed from that of the millions of her fellow-countrywomen when bereaved of their natural protectors, in that she was not ignorant of the world and its ways, and by the fact that she had an education fitting her to open out a path of usefulness for herself. Accordingly, we find her, within a few months of the death of her husband, at Poona, the ancient capital of the Marathas, having resumed her former occupation as lecturer on the Education of Women. The evil custom of confining high caste women within the four walls of the Zenana, which prevails in the Northwest Provinces and other parts of India, is unknown among the Brahmins of the Maratha country. In Poona and Bombay all Marathi women are free to walk and ride abroad, to see and to be seen. This, and the fact that Ramabai had relatives and familyconnections in Poona drew her to recommence her career as a lecturer at this great

[19] (The High Caste Hindu Woman, pp. 56-58)

centre of Brahminism. In prosecuting her object, Ramabai took her stand upon her knowledge of the Shastras, and maintained that their ancient teaching enjoined the instruction of women; and that the neglected and ignorant condition of women was a modern descent into degradation. She advocated that high-caste girls should be instructed before marriage in Sanskrit and the vernacular. She also strongly condemned the practice of child-marriage. Ramabai's lectures made a wide impression upon the best families in Poona, and, through her instrumentality, a Society of highcaste women was formed, having for its object the education of girls and the postponement of marriage to maturity. Encouraged by the success of her work in Poona, Ramabai went from city to city throughout the Maratha country, forming branches of theArya Mahila Somaj, as this woman's Society was called[20]."

Notice that she was unambiguously blaming social practices for the degraded situation of women and did not say that it was due to Hinduism per se; and she proclaimed everything on the authority of scriptures.

But, we saw in chapter 2 that NCERT books say:

Pandita Ramabai, a great scholar of Sanskrit, felt that Hinduism was oppressive towards women, and wrote a book about the miserable lives of upper-caste Hindu women.

NCERT, class 8th, p 113

Why Ramabai, who had been a staunch advocate of Hinduism, took a U-turn and labelled Hinduism as misogynist? This dramatic change came after her conversion from Hinduism to Christianity. Also, notice that the Hindu society, especially Brahmans, welcomed her suggestions and helped her pro-actively. None of these points finds mentionin NCERT books. On the contrary, the NCERTauthors portrayHinduism, particularly Brahmans, retrogressive and frozen in time. To achieve this objective, they insert unsubstantiated and generalised statements which might be good for a sleazy tabloid, but are jarring in history textbooks of a nation.

"She founded a widows' home at Poona to provide shelter to widows who had been treated badly by their husbands' relatives…Needless to say, all this more than alarmed the orthodox. For instance, manyHindu nationalists felt that Hindu women were adopting Western ways and that this would corrupt Hindu culture and erode family values."

NCERT, class 8th, p 113

The earlier passage from her biography, written by Helen Dyer, is from the period of Ramabai's life when she was an independent thinker. In order to convert Ramabai to Christianity, missionaries applied the 'tried and tested' formula; sponsor an overseas tour and shower lavish welcome. She went on a trip to England where she was 'well received' by the Church of England.

"Arriving in England with her baby daughter, Ramabai was kindly received by a Church of England Sisterhood at Wantage… At Wantage, time and opportunity to study the subject were afforded; and here Ramabai confessed herself a Christian, and was baptized, with her little daughter, according to the custom of the Church of England, on September 29th, 1883[21]."

Once converted, she returned to India with a change in tactics and ambition. She started converting local women to Christianity. Whether she converted for the lure of money or some other considerations will never be known, but what is known and recorded is that she became a fanatic evangelist after her baptism.

The trajectory of Ramabai's life is almost entirely opposite to that of Birsa Munda. Birsa rejected Christianity when he found out the devastating effect that this creed was having on local population, whereas Pandita Ramabai fell prey to missionary tactics in her later life. That was the end of her feisty character. The lady who used to address crowds while praising Hinduism on the authority of Hindu scriptures was now using clandestine methods to serve her benefactors. The young and confident lady, who used to give fiery speeches in favour of Hinduism, now started converting slyly.

She received generous funding from European and American evangelists. With the funds at her disposal, she started a home for destitute women called Sharda Sadan. From its very inception, this Sadan became a centre of controversies. When the word went out that she had started converting the inmates, people became wary of it.

The disparaging comment on 'Hindu nationalists' added into the history books by NCERT authors seems to be an oblique reference to the freedom fighter Bal Gangadhar Tilak. Tilak was not only a towering freedom fighter but also an acclaimed scholar of Hinduism and Abrahamic ideologies. Like all leaders with mass appeal, Tilak was quick to gauge the mischief that was brewing.

"Mrs. Ramabai—that enterprising Indian Christian lady — had, by her untiring efforts in America, collected funds for the establishment of a Resident School for Indian girls, especially widows. Mr. Tilak did not at all approve of the idea of a school for Indian girls managed by a Christian lady; but knowing full well that the Reformers could not command the necessarysacrifice and organizing capacity, he reluctantly enrolled his name among the sympathizers of the institution, after satisfying himself that only secular education would be imparted in the school. When, however, he read

in the Illustrated Christian Weekly of New York (21st Dec. 1889) there were about four students in the school studying Christianity or attending Christian prayers in a Church, he indignantly asked what became of Mrs. Ramabai's pledge that the school would strictly remain secular in its character. Mrs. Ramabai protested and explained the circumstances under which her four students were receiving Christian training. TheAdvisory Committee consisting of men like Mr. Ranade and Dr. Bhandarkar took Mrs. Ramabai to task and asked her to confine herself to secular education. Mrs. Ramabai had to yield for a time. But she soon threw overboard the Advisory Committee by managing to secure for herself plenary powers from the Head Office inAmerica. This was the moment when the Advisory Committee ought to have spoken out its mind in unmistakable terms and withdrawn, by means of resignation its moral support from the institution. But the members wanted to outwit Mrs. Ramabai and get a reversal of their decision from the American Head Office; this was an impossibility, as the Head Office had implicit trust in Mrs. Ramabai and it was supplying funds to her mainly for the propagation of Christianity[22]."

The contrast of Ramabai's life with that of Birsa Munda gets magnified when we compare the changes in their lives after they changed loyalties. Munda, who broke away from Christianity was persecuted, hunted, arrested and finally killed by the British. But

[22] (The Life of Lokmanya Tilak, pp. 56-57)

Pandita Ramabai, who co-opted for the missionary apparatus, was funded generously by European and American evangelists. **Indic plurality and the monolithic Umma**

Demeaning Indic traditions and culture serves the same purpose of slicing the Indian society as does the biased glorification of Islamic history. While diversity of Indic society is reduced to mutually antagonistic divisions, the conflicting national and regional identities in Islam, which have led and are still source of incessant largescale bloodshed, are presented in glowing terms.

NCERT authors use words like “umma”, “wider community” and ‘consolidation of faith’ to emphasise a monolithic Islamic identity bereft of any internal fissures. The different Islamic sects like Shia, Sunni, Ahemdiya, Barelvis, Deobandis, Bohras, Wahabis, and numerous others have been waging an internecine war against each other for centuries. But the NCERT authors have suppressed such facts to present a benign and untrue picture of Islam.

All the negative terms inserted to portray a fragmented Indic society are replaced with positive sounding verbs and adjectives for Islam. The underlying message is that Islamic society organically grew with strong foundations of uniformity, without any oppression or conflict:—

“The umma was converted intoa wider communityto include polytheists and the Jews of Medina under the political leadership of Muhammad. Muhammad consolidated the faith for his followers by adding and refining rituals (such as fasting) and ethical principles.”

NCERT, class 11th, p 80

This is perfect example of the NCERT authors’ contrasting treatment of Islamic expansion and Indic society. The above paragraph does not allude to the nature of the ‘conversion of Jews and polytheists’. Unlike the Indic traditions of plurality, the Jews of Arabia had to face an intolerant Islamic expansion.

When Muhammad migrated to Medina, there were three tribes of Jews thriving in and around Medina: Banu Kainuka, Banu Nazir and Banu Quraiza. They were living there for centuries, but after the arrival of Arabian prophet, within next five years, they were either forced into exodus or were slaughtered.

British historian William Muir records the events of this time in the biographyof Muhammad:

“And above all, terror crept over the hearts of the Jews. There was good reason for it. The Beni Cainucaa, who followed the goldsmiths’ craft in their

stronghold outside the city, were the first of the three Jewish tribes to bear the brunt of the Prophet's displeasure. It is asserted that they rebelled and broke their treaty. How the breach first occurred is not altogether certain. Mahomet, we are told, went to their chief place of resort, shortly after his return from Bedr; and, having assembled the chief men, summoned them to acknowledge him as their Prophet. 'By the Lord!' he said, 'ye know full well that I am the Apostle of God. Believe, therefore, before that happens to you which has befallen the Coreish! 'They refused, and defied him to do his worst'."

A siege was laid around the Jewish settlement by him. A massacre was averted due to strong influence of prominent residentAbdullah.

"Forthwith he marshalled his followers, and, placing the great white banner, which had waved over the field of Bedr but a month before, in the hands of Hamza, marched forth to attack the offending tribe…For fifteen days they were closely besieged; and at last, despairing of the looked-for aid, they surrendered at discretion. As, one by one, they issued from the stronghold, their hands were tied behind their backs, and preparations made for execution. But Abdallah, fallen as he was from his high estate, could not endure to see his faithful allies led thus awayto be massacred incold blood…'Abdallah was yet too strong for Mahomet with safety to neglect the appeal so urgently preferred. 'Let them go!' the Prophet said, reluctantly; 'the Lord curse them, and him too!' So Mahomet released them, but commanded that they should be sent into exile[23]."

Banu Nazir (or Banu Nadhir) was the second tribe to become the victim of Islamic expansionism.About a year after the forced exodus of Banu Kainuka, they were also forced into exile by Muhammad for they could not meet his demands[24].

A far more brutal fate awaited the third and only remaining settlement of Jews of Medina – Banu Quraiza. Mohammad and his 3,000 armed followers had surrounded their colony from all sides.

"At last the wretched Jews, brought now to the last verge of starvation, offered to surrender, on condition that their fate should be decided by their

allies the Beni Aus. To this Mahomet agreed; and, after a siege of two or three weeks, the whole tribe, men, women, and children, over 2,000 souls, came forthfrom their stronghold. The men, handcuffed behind their backs, were kept apart, under Mohammed, the assassin of Kab. The women and children, torn from their protectors, were placed under charge of a renegade Jew.As they passed before the conqueror, his eye marked the lovely features of Rihana, and he destined her for himself. The spoil, consisting of household stuff, clothes and armour, camels and flocks, were all brought forth to await the arbiter's award. The store

[23] (The Life of Mahomet, pp. 233-235)

of wine and fermented liquors was poured forth, as now forbidden to Believers. The Beni Aus, with whom the judgment lay, were urgent with the Prophet that their ancient allies should be spared. 'These are our confederates,' they cried importunately; show them at least the same pity as, at the suit of the Beni Khazraj, thou didst show to their allies the Beni Nadhir.' 'Are ye then content,' replied Mahomet, 'that they be judged by one of yourselves?' They answered, 'Yes,'and Mahomet forthwith nominated Sad ibn Muadh to be the judge.

Butchery of Banu Quraiza

The captives, still under charge of Mohammed, were dragged roughly along; one alone was treated with tenderness and care— it was Rihana the beautiful Jewess, set apart for Mahomet. The men were shut up in a yard, separate from the women and children; they were supplied with dates and spent in prayer the hours of darkness, repeating passages from their Scriptures and exhorting one another to faith and constancy. During the night trenches sufficient to contain the dead bodies of the men were dug across the marketplace of the city. In the morning, Mahomet, himselfa spectator of the tragedy, commanded the male captives to be brought forth in companies of five or six at a time. Each company as it came up was made to sit down in a row on the brink of the trench destined for its grave, there beheaded, and the bodies cast therein. And so with company after company, till all were slain.'

The butchery, begun in the morning, lasted all day, and continued bytorchlight till the evening. Having thus drenched the market-place with the

blood of seven or eight hundred victims, and having given command for the earth to be smoothed over their remains, Mahomet returned from the horrid spectacle to solace himself with the charms of Rihana, whose husband and all her male relatives had just perished in the massacre. He invited her to be his wife; but she declined, and chose to remain (as indeed, having refused marriage, she had no alternative) his slave or concubine.' She also declined the summons to conversion, and continued in the Jewish faith, at which the Prophet was much concerned. It is said, however, that she afterwards embraced Islam. She did not many years survive her unhappy fate.

The booty was divided into four classes—lands, chattels, cattle, and slaves; and Mahomet took a fifth of each. There were (besides the little children who counted with their mothers) a thousand captives; from his share of these, Mahomet made certain presents to his friends of slave girls and female servants. The rest of the women and children he sent to be sold among the Bedouin tribes of Nejd, in exchange for horses and arms in the service of the State; for he kept steadily in view the advantage of raising a body of efficient cavalry. The remaining property was divided amongst the 3,000 soldiers ofMedina, tothe highest bidders among whom the women were also sold[25]."

This should give a fair idea to the readers about the manner in which 'Jews' were 'included' under suzerainty of Islamic "umma" to create a 'wider community'.

The Nishads

A lot of ink and vile are used to depict Nishad as a community that was mistreated by the Brahmanical norms.
"BEYOND THE FOUR VARNAS: INTEGRATION – Given the diversity of the subcontinent, there were, and always have been, populations whose social practices were not influenced by Brahmanical ideas. When they figure in *Sanskrit texts*, they are often described as odd, uncivilized, or even animal-like. In some instances, these included forestdwellers – for whom hunting and gathering remained an important means of subsistence. Categories such as the *nishada,* to which Ekalavya is supposed to have belonged, are examples of this. Others who were *viewed with suspicion*

included populations such as nomadic pastoralists, who could not be easilyaccommodated within the framework of settled agriculturists. *Sometimes those who spoke nonSanskritic languages* were labelled as *mlechchhas* and looked down upon. There was nonetheless also a sharing of ideas and beliefs between these people. The nature of relations is evident in some stories in the *Mahabharata*."

NCERT, class 12th, p 64

Stories from Mahabharat are cherry picked and then spiced up with deviously chosen words to create a distorted version of events. The story of Nishad and the unethical treatment given to him by Dronacharya is presented as 'atrocity literature', in which a 'dark Nishad' is mistreated by a 'fair' caste. Thus, a case of 'racial' discrimination is being insinuated.

"Here is a story from the Adi Parvan of the Mahabharata:

Once Drona, a Brahmana who taught archery to the Kuru princes, was approached by Ekalavya, a forest dwelling nishada (a hunting community). When Drona, who knew the dharma, refused to have him as his pupil, Ekalavya returned to the forest, prepared an image of Drona out of clay, and treating it as his teacher, began to practise on his own. In due course, he acquired great skill in archery. One day, the Kuru princes went hunting and their dog, wandering in the woods, came upon Ekalavya. When the dog smelt the dark nishada wrapped in black deer skin, his bodycaked with dirt, it began to bark. Annoyed, Ekalavya shot seven arrows into its mouth. When the dog returned to the Pandavas, they were amazed at this superb display of archery. They tracked down Ekalavya, who introduced himself as a pupil of Drona. Drona had once told his favourite studentArjuna, that he would be unrivalled amongst his pupils.Arjuna now reminded Drona about this. Drona approached Ekalavya, who immediately acknowledged and honoured him as his teacher. When Drona demanded his right thumb as his fee, Ekalavya unhesitatingly cut it off and offered it. But thereafter, when he shot with his remaining fingers, he was no longer as fast as he had been before. Thus, Drona kept his word: no one was better than Arjuna."

NCERT, class 12th, p 62 And finally, the icing on the cake is added in the form of a teaser:—

“What message do you think this story was meant to convey to the nishadas? What message would it convey to Kshatriyas? Do you think that Drona, as a Brahmana, was acting according to the Dharmasutras when he was teaching archery?”

To drive home the wedge further, NCERT authors resort to inserting fictional tale of Mahabharat written by somebody aligned to their own ideology:—

“The growth of the Mahabharata did not stop withthe Sanskrit version. Over the centuries, versions of the epic were written in a variety of languages through an ongoing process of dialogue between peoples, communities, and those who wrote the texts…Let us look at one example, an episode from the Mahabharata that has been transformed by Mahashweta Devi, a contemporary Bengali writer known for raising her voice against all forms of exploitation and oppression. In this particular instance, she works out alternative possibilities from the main story of the Mahabharata and draws attention to questions on which the Sanskrit text is silent.… She added that while Kunti had been reflecting on her past, not once did she remember the six innocent lives that were lost because she had wanted to save herself and her sons.”

NCERT, class 12th, p 78 The phrases are carefully worded to exaggerate the atrocity and also to pin the blame on Brahmans and the caste system. Such manipulated portrayalmight evoke feelings ofrage against Brahmans and allied traditions inthe mind ofanyNishad or tribalstudent reading these books.
Ironically, as in all such perversions by NCERT authors, the true perspective emerges from ‘Brahmanical’ ‘Sanskritic’ texts. The Shanti parv of Mahabharat contains story of a Nishad called Kaayavya. He is stated to be brave, good warrior and intelligent. Among the qualities that are attributed to him, one that knocks out the bottom from the claims of NCERT authors is that, this Nishad, had knowledge of scriptures. The word used for him is ' kkL=kK[26], which can refer only to a person who is a master of ‘Sanskrit’

scriptures.
Then he is stated to be born from the union of a Kshatriya with a Nishad woman and he followed the duties of a Kshatriya; another confirmation of the fluidity of the 'varna' system. He could defeat an army of hundreds. Living in the forest, he used to take care of

[26] (Mahabharat, p. 409, vol 5)

his deaf and blind parents and worshipped them. He used to feed his parents with a variety of foods with utmost respect and also served other respectable persons.
Can a community use such adjectives for those people whom it views as 'animal-like' or who were 'viewed with suspicion'? Had Nishad as a communityreferred to 'those who spoke non-Sanskritic languages', then he would never have been called a' kkL=kK.

The NCERT authors even lie to entrench the idea of fragmented Indic society, which it was not. But, the same bunch of authors feels no need to educate the students about the visceral hatred between Muslims and non-Muslims. For instance, Mongols or Mughals were considered inveterate enemies of Muslims and Islam for many centuries till some of them converted to it. Mongols decimated the cherished caliphate of the Islamic world with the cruelty with which it was established. Earlier, Muslim attempts to convert Mongols had failed miserably.

The Muslim hatred for Mongols can be gauged from the writings of Amir Khusro.
"Barbak advanced straight to the place of salutation, and bowing his body, brought his forehead to the earth. From the common soldier to the lord of tymbals, all obtained the honour of kissing hands, and received royal rewards without measure for their services—standards of golden cloth, horses, and other rarities. There were more than a thousand Tatar infidels and warriors of other tribes, riding on camels, great commanders in battle, all with steel-like bodies clothed in cotton; with faces like fire, with caps of sheep-skin, with their heads shorn. Their eyes were so narrow and piercing that they might have bored a hole in a brazen vessel. Their stink was more horrible than their colour. Their faces were set on their bodies as if they had

no neck. Their cheeks resembled soft leather bottles, full of wrinkles and knots. Their noses extended from cheek to cheek, and their mouths from cheek-bone to cheek-bone. Their nostrils resembled rotten graves, and from them the hair descended as far as the lips. Their moustaches were of extravagant length. They had but scanty beards about their chins. Their chests, of a colour half black, half white, were so covered with lice, which they looked like sesame growing on a bad soil. Their whole body, indeed, was covered with these insects, and their skin as rough-grained as chagreen leather, fit onlyto be converted into shoes. They devoured dogs and pigs with their nasty teeth. I have heard another story about them, that what one man vomits another eats, but this is no great wonder, for they are Turks of Kai. Their origin is derived from dogs, but they have larger bones. The king marveled at their beastly countenances, and said, that God had created them out of hell-fire. They looked like so many white demons, and the people fled from them everywhere in affright[27]."

Nowhere do the NCERT authors say that the 'Persian texts described them as animal-like and were viewed with suspicion'. Despite irreconcilable differences and visceral hatred between different sections adhering to alien ideologies, they are projected as a unified group.

Different communities, interconnected and inter-dependent overcenturies, free to follow their traditions withinthe over-all framework of Dharmic values, are straitjacketed into rigid and mutuallyconflicting "tribes", and presented rebelling against "Brahmanism". The NCERT authors do all this on the basis of conjectures and outright lies, without any substantiation.

[27] (Khusro, KIRANU-S SA'DAIN, Elliot & Dowson, Volume 3, pp. 528-529)

Do we need to tell our children about the invasive and hatred filled ideologies against whom these "tribes" fought relentlessly over a millennium? Do we need to inculcate among our children hatred for their fellow countrymen?

NCERT authors have chosen to spread as much hatred as possible. But, can we let them make this vicious choice on our behalf?Today, many of these "tribes" have been converted to Islam. Though the NCERT would like

children to believe that all this happened peacefully, we know the answer after reading not one, but several original sources containing the actual account of how brutally some of these communities were converted to Islam. Gakhars, Khokkars and Jats in the North-West regions (now mostly spread in Pakistan) stand disjointed from their root sources, first by forced conversions, and secondly, by the devious colonial history writing.

In India, even those communities who couldn't be converted to Islam or Christianity are the target and victim of a malicious history being written by NCERT authors. Shouldn't the children of this countrybe told how brutally the Meo community was converted by Balban? Or, shouldn't they learn about how the British, Christian missionaries and their stooges tried to subjugate the Gonds, and other such communities?

Yes, a few of these communities faced— and even now face— discrimination and prejudices, but can we allow NCERT authors' attempt to present Hinduism, particularly Brahmans as the cause of all this? These authors haven't presented even a single fact in support of their claims, and in contrast, there are scores of historical and literary facts contradicting NCERT authors' claims (some of which we shared in this chapter).

In Hinduism and in most other Dharmic traditions, diversityis to be cherished unlike the Abrahamic cults. There is no compulsion to worship a (particular) god or follow a specific worshiping practice. This fundamental freedom arises out of the belief in a divine pervading all, and which can be realised through several paths. But for the NCERT authors this freedom and pluralityis to be presented as rebellion against "Brahmanism". Again, these authors attempt this, bereft of any facts.

CHAPTER 8 The Evil Brahmans

The NCERT authors vilify Brahmans as the source and cause of all evil in the Indian society. For the NCERT, the Brahman is the embodiment of exploitation, discrimination, stagnancy, class struggle, conflict, superstition and misogyny. The Indian society is straightjacketed into a rigid caste structure designed and dominated by Brahmans. In adopting the Christian

missionary and colonial construct of the Indian society, the NCERT authors neglect both, the historical facts as well as the guiding principles of the Indic civilization.

T

he development of a society does not take place in vacuum. It is always a result of dedicated intellectuals who toil for its creation, evolution and sustenance. They create or suggest social norms that become instrumental in society formation. The longevity of a culture or a society and its values depend on the robustness, practicalityand equanimityof these norms. Moreover, it is this class that sets example of adherence to these norms for others to follow.

The intellectuals, who were responsible for a sophisticated and meritbased society in our country, have been called Brahmans. The result was a society in which ethics were given prime importance. Even persons belonging to traditions inimical to the Indic traditions have praised the nature of inhabitants of India. The minister of Akbar, Abul Fazal, writes inAin-e-Akbari:
"The Hindus are religious, affable, courteous to strangers, cheerful, enamoured of knowledge, lovers of justice, able in business, grateful, admirers of truth, and ofunbounded fidelity in all their dealings. Their character shines brightest in adversity. Their soldiers (the Rajputs) know not what it is to flyfrom the field of battle; but when the success of the combat becomes doubtful, theydismount from their horses, and throw away their lives in payment of the debt of valour.[1]"

The credit for creating such an amiable society should also be given to Brahmans. On the contrary, NCERT books portray them to be responsible for all the ills of society. The historybooks in circulation since 2006 systematically malign every element belonging to its tradition and cultural heritage, one of the targets of this malicious propaganda are Brahmans. It does not imply that the present NCERT books and their authors are pioneers in this respect. Malice against Brahmans has been going on in India since the time of Turk invaders who are glorified in the NCERT books as Sultans.

During the times of Sultans and later Mughals, the attack on Brahmans was physical. The technique changed with the advent of Christian missionaries, who adopted a more sophisticated approach. They devised laws to eliminate or banish Brahmans from territories ruled by European intruders.

Ever since independence, anti-Brahmanism has been assiduously built up by parochial politicians and intellectuals of leftist leanings. On the same line, the present history books are the latest incarnation ofanti-Brahmanism. Thus, malicious anti-Brahmanpolemic has been a part of popular discourse in India for a considerable period.

The villainous portrayal in the pop media notwithstanding, history stands witness to the sterling service this community of people has

[1] (Modern India and the Indians, p. 360)

rendered to our civilization in general and humanity at large. In an era, when anti-Brahmanism is in vogue, praising them is not a very lucrative option. But then the aim of this book is to present historical facts, which may or may not be, in sync with perceptions of the pop culture. We will let the historical records speak for themselves.

“In India the whole people are divided intoabout sevencastes. Among these are sophists who are not so numerous as others, but hold supreme place of dignity and honour – for they are under no necessity of doing bodily labour at all, or of contributing from the produce or their labour anything to the common stock, nor indeed is any duty absolutely binding on them except to perform sacrifices offered to the God on behalf of the state. If anyone again has a private sacrifice to offer, one of these sophists shows him the proper mode, as if he could not otherwise make an acceptable offer to the gods. To this class the knowledge of divination among the Indians is exclusively restricted…

The custom of the country prohibits intermarriage between the castes… custom also prohibits anyone from exercising two trades, or from changing from one caste to another. One cannot, for instance, become a husbandsman if he is a herdsman or become a herdsman if he is an artisan. It is permitted

that the sophist only be from any caste: for the life of a sophist is not an easy one, but hardest of all[2]."

Two facts stand out in this passage – anyone could be a Brahman and secondly, it was a tough job being a Brahman as it involved working for the larger cause while living a frugal and harsh life. Yet, as depicted in the NCERT books, Brahmans were nepotists of

[2] (Ancient India as described by Megasthenes and Arrian, pp. 209-213)

the worst kind who had a very easy life and sat on the top of social order as rapacious parasites on society.

"There are two groups who are described in terms of their work – the priests, sometimes called Brahmins, who performed various rituals and the rajas."
NCERT, class 6th, p 46

"Varna and access to property – According to the Brahminical texts, another criterion (apart from gender) for regulating access to wealth was varna. As we saw earlier, the only "occupation" prescribed for Shudras was servitude, while a variety of occupations were listed for men of the first three varnas. If these provisions were actually implemented, the wealthiest men would have been the Brahmanas and the Kshatriyas. That this corresponded to some extent with social realities is evident from descriptions of priests and kings in other textual traditions. Kings are almost invariably depicted as wealthy; priests are also generally shown to be rich, though there are occasional depictions of the poor Brahmana."
NCERT, p 69, class 12th

The import of the above passages is that Brahmans were responsible for division of societyin which theychose the coziest job of receiving gifts and created a hereditary institution of caste. In short, NCERT is creating villains out of heroes. The propaganda technique of presenting a group of persons as immoral and villainous is called demonising or dehumanising. The term

priest is used as a dysphemism to discredit the role played by Brahmans in creating a decentralised merit-based society.
By defining Brahmans as the architects of caste system, which is portrayed as a social evil, the perception of students is being altered byNCERT experts. This technique serves the purpose ofdiminishing the perceived righteousness of the mark, which in this case, is Brahmans.

Every foreign traveller corroborates the virtues of Brahmans, especially their aloofness to materialistic desires. Brahmans would not leave the righteous path even if offered to be a king.

“Only such a Brahman should be made in charge who has no attraction for money[3].”

“Brahmans should not accept alms which are unjustified and which they do not deserve and should neither give unnecessary alms… Whenever he receives alms or money, he should perform ‘yajna’ or donate it. He should never use any kind of money for his selfish use alone… A worldly Brahman should accept donations to feed elderly, hungry, unhealthy, guru, sages and deities. For a Brahman, there is no other path of rightfully acquiring wealth accept donations[4].”

Had theybeen obsessed with accumulation of wealth, as our expert authors at the NCERT make them out to be, they would not have set such rigorous conditions for themselves. Their fidelityis vouched for by numerous visitors to India, belonging to different faiths.

We read earlier what Magasthenes said about Brahmans in around 300 BCE. In the sixteenth century CE, Portuguese apothecary and diplomat Tom Pires visited India and found that not much had changed in the individual and social behaviour of Brahmans:

“There are a great many heathens in the kingdom of Goa …Some of them very honoured men with large fortunes; and almost the whole kingdom lies in their hands, … Some

[3] (Mahabharat, vol 5, p. 235)
[4] (ibid. p. 733)

of them are noblemen with many followers and lands of their own and are persons of great repute, and wealthy, and they live on their estates which are gay and fresh … They have beautiful temples of their own in this kingdom … There are some very honoured stocks among these Brahmins … These Brahmins are greatly revered throughout the country, particularly among the heathens… They are clever, prudent, learned in their religion. A Brahmin would not become a Mohammedan (even) if he were made a king[5]."

The second pertinent point about the above-mentioned passage from NCERT textbooks is regarding scriptures. The term 'Brahminical text' is another invention of NCERT experts. It will fall in the category of dysphemism. One purpose of a dysphemism is that it protects the propagandist from falling into a legal battle.

Let us look at Mahabharat as an example. It is one of the most revered scriptures for all "Brahmanical texts". The text specifically talks about Brahmans in various hymns. The code of conduct laid down for Brahmans explicitly states that they should not hanker after worldly gains and material wealth. This behaviour exposes the malicious intent of NCERT authors.

"Brahmans should not accept anything which they do not deserve and should neither give unnecessary alms. Whenever he receives any money, he should perform 'yajna' or donate it. He should never use any kind of money for his selfish use alone[6]."

Even the memoirs of Mughal king Jahangir explode the myth that one became Brahman just because he was born to Brahman parents. "The learned of India have established four modes of life for

[5] (The Suma Oriental of Tomé Pires, pp. 58-59)
[6] (Mahabharat, vol.5, p. 733)

the caste of Brahmins, which is the most honored of the castes of Hindus, and have divided their lives into four periods. These four periods they call

the four ashrams. The boy who is born in a Brahmin's house they do not call Brahmin till he is 7 years old, and take no trouble on the Subject.

After he has arrived at the age of 8 years, theyhave a meeting and collect the Brahmins together… they hand him over to a learned Brahmin that he may remain in his house for twelve years, and employ himself in reading the Vedas, which they believe in as God's book. From this day forward they call him a Brahmin.

During this time it is necessary that he should altogether abstain from bodily pleasures. When midday is passed he goes as a beggar to the houses of other Brahmins, and bringing what is given him to his preceptor, eats it with his permission. For clothing, with the exceptionof a loincloth (lungi) of cotton to cover his private parts, and 2 or 3 more gaz of cotton which he throws over his back, he has nothing else. This state is called brahmacharya, which is, being busied with the Divine books.After this period has passed, with the leave of his preceptor and his father, he marries, and is allowed to enjoy all the pleasures of his five senses until the time when he has a son who shall have attained the age of 16 years. If he does not have a son, he passes his days till he is 48 in the social life. During this time they call him a grihast, that is, householder.After that time, separating himself from relatives, connections, strangers, and friends, and giving up all things of enjoyment and pleasure, he retires to a place of solitude from the place of attachment to sociality (ta'alluq-i-abad-ikasrat), and passes his days in the jungle. They call this condition banprasta, that is, abode in the jungle.
… When he completes this period in the manner related, he returns to his own house, and having commended his wife to his children and brothers and sons-in-law, goes to pay his respects to his spiritual guide, and burns by throwing into the fire in his presence whatever he has in the way of a zunnar (shikha), the hair of his head, etc., and says to him: "Whatever attachment (ta'alluq) I may have had, even to abstinence and worshipping and will, I have rooted up out of my heart." Then he closes the road to his heart and to his desires and is always employed in contemplation of God, and knows no one except the True Cause of Being (God). If he speaks of science it is the science of Vedanta.[7]"

The memoirs ofJahangir show that the system followed byBrahmans is a continuous tradition since Vedic period. This system is based on merit of the individual and not on the accident of birth. It is a Varnabased system and not a caste (a foreign term)-based one.

Alms versus gifts

To present Brahmans as selfish and greedy group, vocabulary is chosen carefully:—

"Brahmins were expected to study (and teach) the Vedas, perform sacrifices and receive gifts."
NCERT, class 6th, p 55

Brahmans were mandated to not only receive alms but also donate if they had anything surplus and lead a simple life. But, the NCERT authors omit this aspect. Moreover, the word in all Sanskrit texts is nkuthat should most suitably be translated as 'alms'. But when the reference is of Brahmans, the NCERT authors are translating it as gift. The connotation of both the words is entirely different, though

[7] (Tuzuki Jahangiri, pp. 357-359)

they may appear to be equally valid translations. 'Alms' gives an impression of a life of hardship and struggle, but by translating it as gifts the perception is altered to associate it with an affluent lifestyle.

In contrast, when referring toAbrahamic creeds, the same NCERT authors use 'alms':

"The (Muslim) communitysurvived on agriculture and trade, as well as an alms tax (zakat). In addition, the Muslims organised expeditionary raids (ghazw) on Meccan caravans and nearby oases. These raids provoked reactions from the Meccans and caused a breach with the Jews of Medina."

NCERT, class 11th, p 80

This should give the readers an idea of the rigour with whichNCERT authors are maligning the autochthonous traditions and elevating alien creeds.

The above passage from class 11th is regarding the early years of Islam. Terms 'survived'and 'alms'are evidently designed to evoke sympathy for Muslims, as if they were living a life of hardship on meagre means. The historical facts are to the contrary. Historian William Muir explains the hostile attitude of early Muslims after the migration of Muhammad to Medina.

It was now a year and a half since Mahomet and his growing followers had fled for refuge to Medina. Their attitude towards Mecca was becoming daily more hostile. Latterly, no opportunity had been lost of threatening the numerous caravans passing through the Hejaz…The last attack had also shown that Mahomet and his followers, in the combat on which they were entering, would respect neither life nor the inviolabilityof the Sacred months. Blood had been shed— treacherously and sacrilegiously shed—and was yet unavenged. Still Mecca made no hostile response. Though followers of the Prophet were in the city, no cruelties were perpetrated on them, nor any reprisals attempted. But the breachwas widening, and the enmitybecoming deeper seated: blood could be washed out by blood alone.

At Medina, on the other hand, the prospect of mortal conflict with their enemies was steadily contemplated, and openly spoken of by Mahomet and his adherents[8].

To hide this aspect of the early years of Islam, neutral sounding term 'expeditionaryraids'is used. Such expeditions, called Ghazw, are considered a meritorious act in Islamic doctrine. Those who participate in such acts are known as Ghazi[9]. It is exactly this legacy that was emulated by Islamic intruders into India.

Birth or worth

The historical records indicate that the Indian society, since the Vedic period, was well organised into different functional groups. Known as the Varna system, this division was according to the merit and aptitude of individuals

rather than their birth. But for the NCERT writers these historical facts don't matter. In their obsession to label Brahamans as evil they invented the lie that Varna system was based on birth, and rules were prescribed by the Brahmans. During the medieval period, hordes of intruders ruptured this system and made every effort to replace it with their own. Flouting all ethics with impunity, NCERT authors portrayIslam as a social system that came as a boon for Indian society, a society that was sunk into casteism, misogyny and many other vices. The NCERT's version of history tries to convey that the Muslim rulers, since times of Sultanate, were harbingers of a change that resulted

[8] (The Life of Mahomet, pp. 203-204)
[9] NCERT, class 8th, p. 58

inliberationof Indianpopulationfrom the clutches ofwilyBrahmans. Even when the NCERT authors discuss the inequalities of the Mughal period, they still surreptitiouslylink it with Brahmans.

In large parts of the subcontinent, societywas alreadydivided according to the rules of varna. These rules, as prescribed by the Brahmans, were accepted by the rulers of large kingdoms. The difference between the high and low, and between the rich and poor, increased. Under the Delhi Sultans and the Mughals, this hierarchy between social classes grew further."

NCERT, class 7th, p 91

Varna-based division was founded on the merit and aptitude of individuals, whereas the social differences during the rule of Islamic plunderers were based onreligious bigotry, mistreatment and tyranny. There is no historical evidence of Brahmans being instrumental in economic disparity. On the other hand, there is a plethora of evidences pointing to the parasitic nature of Islamic rulers. French traveller Francois Bernier gives a detailed exposition of the exploitative nature of Mughal rulers:

"Of the vast tracts of country constituting the empire of *Hindoustan,* many are little more than sand, or barren mountains, badly cultivated, and thinly peopled; and even a considerable portion of the good land remains untilled

from want of labourers; many of whom perish in consequence of the bad treatment theyexperience from the Governors. These poor people, when incapable of discharging the demands of their rapacious lords, are not onlyoften deprived of the means of subsistence, but are bereft of their children, who are carried away as slaves. Thus it happens that many of the peasantry, driven to despair by so execrable a tyranny, abandon the country, and seek a more tolerable mode of existence, either in the towns, or camps; as bearers of burdens, carriers of water, or servants to horsemen. Sometimes they fly to the territories of a Raja, because there they find less oppression, and are allowed a greater degree of comfort.

We have seen how in the *Indies* the gold and silver disappear in consequence of the tyranny of Timariots, Governors, and Revenue contractors—a tyranny which even the monarch, if so disposed, has no means of controlling in provinces not contiguous to his capital—a tyranny often so excessive as to deprive the peasant and artisan of the necessaries of life, and leave them to die of misery and exhaustion—a tyranny owing to which those wretched people either have no children at all, or have them only to endure the agonies of starvation, and to die at a tender age—a tyranny, in fine, that drives the cultivator of the soil from his wretched home to some neighbouring state, in hopes of finding milder treatment, or to the army, where he becomes the servant of some trooper. As the ground is seldom tilled otherwise than by compulsion, and as no person is found willing and able to repair the ditches and canals for the conveyance of water, it happens that the whole country is badly cultivated, and a great part rendered unproductive from the want of irrigation. The houses, too, are left in a dilapidated condition, there being few people who will either build new ones, or repair those which are tumbling down. The peasant cannot avoid asking himself this question: 'Why should I toil for a tyrant who may come tomorrow and lay his rapacious hands upon all I possess and value, without leaving me, if such should be his humour, the means to drag on mymiserable existence ?'—The Timariots, Governors, and Revenue contractors, on their part reason in this manner: 'Why should the neglected state of this land create uneasiness in our minds?And why should we expend our own money and time to render it fruitful.' We may be deprived of it in a single moment, and our exertions would benefit neither ourselves nor our children. Let us draw from the soil

all the money we can, though the peasant should starve or abscond, and we should leave it, when commanded to quit, a dreary wilderness.'

The facts I have mentioned are sufficient to account for the rapid decline of the *Asiatic* states. It is owing to this miserable system of government that most towns in *Hindoustan* are made up of earth, mud, and other wretched materials; that there is no city or town which, if it be not already ruined and deserted, does not bear evident marks of approaching decay[10]."

Brahmans as architects of untouchability

As for the allegation of untouchability, NCERT authors resort to half lies and quote foreign travellers out of context.

When and why a social evil like untouchability crept into this meritbased society? There are no definite answers. But, we notice that since the colonial times, Mahatma Gandhi, Veer Savarkar, Arya Samaj, Dr Ambedkar and many others made a lot of efforts to eradicate this social malady. There is no doubt that the children of our country have the right to know about the existence of such anomalies as this is not a healthy practice for anysociety. Moreover, one of the objectives of studying history is to make sure that the future generations are aware of any wrongdoings of their ancestors. This ensures that past follies are not repeated. But the way facts are twisted and presented byNCERT authors give a highly distorted [10] (Travels in The Mogul Empire, p. 205)

view of the practice. Every effort is made in these books to paste the badge of culprit on the ancient Indian society, Brahmans and Hindu scriptures.

"We have many books that were composed in north India, especially in the areas drained by the Ganga and theYamuna, during this period. These books are often called later Vedic, because they were composed after the Rigveda about which you learnt in Chapter 5. These include the Samaveda, Yajurveda and Atharvaveda, as well as other books. These were composed by priests, and described how rituals were to be performed. They also contained rules about society… The priests divided people into four groups, called varnas. According to them, each varna had a different set of functions… The priests also said that these groups were decided on the basis of birth. For example, if one's father and mother were Brahmins one would automaticallybecome a

Brahmin, and so on. Later, they classified some people as untouchable. These included some crafts persons, hunters and gatherers, as well as people who helped perform burials and cremations. The priests said that contact with these groups was polluting."

NCERT, class 6th, pp 55-56

In class 6th, the student learns that Brahmans created Vedas that were tools to divide society in such a way that they appropriated the coziest role for themselves and forced others into a life of perpetual indignity. It is bound to create a feeling of revulsion for his heritage, Brahmans, Vedas and the Varna system.

Going further, in the same class the child will learn that evil practice of untouchability was so widespread that even foreign travellers noticed it and condemned it.
"The Chinese pilgrim Fa Xian noticed the plight of those who were treated as untouchables by the high and mighty. They were expected to live on the outskirts of the city. He writes: "If such a man enters a town or a market place, he strikes a piece of wood, in order to keep himself separate; people, hearing this sound, know what it means and avoid touching him or brushing against him."

NCERT, class 6th, p 119

If all this is true then it should be a part of the learning curve of the children. By now, you might have guessed that this unpalatable image of our past is generated by judicious use of innuendos and half lies. On cross-checking we find that NCERT authors invert the implication of Fa Xian's observations. They put an entirely different spin to what he recorded in his travelogues. His explanation of contemporary Indian society is:

"The people are numerous and happy; they have not to register their households, or attend to any magistrates and their rules; only those who cultivate the royal land have to pay a portion of the gain from it. If they want to go they go; if they want to stay on, they stay. The king governs without decapitation or other corporal punishments. Criminals are simplyfined,

lightlyor heavily, according to the circumstances of each case. Even in cases of repeated attempts at wicked rebellion, they only have their right hands cut off. The king's body-guards and attendants all have salaries. Throughout the whole country the people do not kill any living creature, nor drink intoxicating liquor, nor eat onions or garlic. The only exception is that of the Chandalas. That is the name for those who are held to be wicked men, and live apart from others. When they enter the gate of a city or a market-place, they strike a piece of wood to make themselves known, so that men know and avoid them, and do not come into contact with them. In that country they do not keep pigs and fowls, and do not sell live cattle; in the markets there are no butchers' shops and nodealers inintoxicating drink. Inbuying and selling commodities they use cowries. Only the Chandalas are fishermen and hunters, and sell flesh meat[11]."

The testimonyof the Chinese traveller makes it clear that the NCERT authors have deliberately distorted the import of Fa Xian's travelogue to paint a factually incorrect picture. The fact is that untouchability did not have anything to do with birth-based discrimination. It was based on the prevalent social ethos according to which animals were treated with consideration. Those who harmed animals were considered amoral and cruel, hence were not considered worthy of social respect.

Although Fa Xian does not use words 'plight' or 'high and mighty', yet NCERT unabashedly puts these words in his mouth.

It is not only the Chinese pilgrim who is misquoted by NCERT. The words ofAl-Beruni are distorted to create an impression that foreign travellers found the caste system to be very oppressive.

"AL-BERUNI'S DESCRIPTION OF THE CASTE SYSTEM – Al-Biruni tried to explain the caste system by looking for parallels in other societies. He noted that in ancient Persia, four social categories were recognised: those of knights and princes; monks, fire-priests and lawyers; physicians, astronomers and other scientists; and finally, peasants and artisans. In other words, he attempted to suggest that social divisions were not unique to India.

At the same time he pointed out that within Islam all men were considered equal, differing only in their observance of piety. In spite of

[11] (Wilson, The Life of Fa Hien, pp. 230-231)

his acceptance of the Brahmanical description of the caste system, Al-Biruni disapproved of the notion of pollution. He remarked that everything which falls into a state of impurity strives and succeeds in regaining its originalcondition ofpurity. The sun cleanses the air, and the salt in the sea prevents the water from becoming polluted. If it were not so, insisted AlBiruni, life on earth would have been impossible. The conception of social pollution, intrinsic to the caste system, was according to him, contrary to the laws of nature."

NCERT, class 12th, p 124 Now, let us compare the text ofAl-Beruni with the version given in NCERT books. InAl-Beruni's 'Kitab Ul Hind':—

"After the Brahmarshi and Rajarshi come those classes of the populace which exist also among us, the castes, to whom we shall devote a separate chapter[12]."

Contrary to the assertion of NCERT, Al-Beruni is confessing that the class division also exists among Muslims. Then he gives a very remarkable observationregarding the intermingling ofvarious castes.

"Much, however, as these classes differ from each other, they live together in the same towns and villages, mixed together in the same houses and lodgings[13]."

Inunambiguous terms he states that according toHindu philosophers, everyone is capable of attaining the state of liberation.

"According to the Hindu philosophers, liberation is common to all castes and to the whole human race, if their intention of obtaining it is perfect[14]."

[12] (Kitabul Hind,vol 1, p. 93)

[13] (ibid, p. 101)

[14] (ibid, p. 104)

NCERT authors lay a lot of emphasis on the term ‘pollution’, which according to them is ‘intrinsic to the caste system’, without any supporting facts.

In fact, it is theAbrahamic creeds in which ‘pollution’is ‘intrinsic’. These creeds are based on the notion that all non-believers are polluted. According to Islamic theologian Maulana Sharfuddin, Timurlame attacked India as he wanted to cleanse India of Hinduism as Hindus (that is, Kafirs) are polluted.

“Just at that time he (Timurlame) had resolved to assemble forces from all his dominions, and to march against China, with the intent of destroying the idol temples, and of raising mosques in their places. He had previously heard that the standards of the faith of Islam had been raised in Dehli and other places, and that its profession of faith was impressed upon the coins, but that the country in general was polluted by the inhabitants being infidels and idolaters. Impelled by the desire of waging a religious war, he resolved to march against Multan and Dehli. He consulted with his nobles and chiefs, and they concurred in the propriety of making the invasion[15].”

But then, blaming Timurlame for such bigotry would be too naïve. He was just adhering to what is written in Qur’an.According to the Qur’anic doctrine, non-Muslims are to be considered as ‘worst of beasts’. This discrimination is not of a benign form in which nonMuslims are to be considered untouchable – they have to be fought against, punished and beheaded:—

“And fight them until there is no more Fitnah (disbelief and worshipping of others along with Allah) and (all and every kind of) worship is for Allah (Alone). But if they cease, let

[15] (ZafarNama, p. 480)

there be no transgression except against Az-Zalimun (the polytheists, and wrong-doers, etc.)[16]”

“Say to those who have disbelieved, if they cease (from disbelief) their past will be forgiven. But if they return (thereto), then the examples of those (punished) before them have already preceded (as a warning).

And fight them until there is no more Fitnah (disbelief and polytheism: i.e. worshipping others besides Allah) and the religion (worship) will all be for AllahAlone [in the whole of the world]. But if they cease (worshipping others besides Allah), then certainly, Allah is All-Seer of what they do[17].

Lo! The worst of beasts in Allah’s sight are the ungrateful who will not believe.[18]"

Yet, we find NCERT books replete with references to caste system being bad and Islam ‘appealing’. The founder of Islam, Muhammad, is presented in glowing terms.

“Muhammad consolidated the faithfor his followers byadding and refining rituals (such as fasting) and ethical principles.” NCERT, class 11th, p 80

The version of events presented by NCERT seems to suggest that Islam was some kind of refinement for a debased pre-Islamic Arabia. This is thoroughly unjust on pre-IslamicArabs. Today we have a large amount of literature and historical evidence of the preIslamicArabian society. It was a pluralistic society in which women had an exalted position. The code of ethics was also pretty refined. The impact of the new religion is best explained by British historian DS Margoliouth in his acclaimed biographyon Muhammad.

[16] Qur’an 2:193
[17] Qur’an 8:38,39
[18] Qur’an 8:55

“Men who had never broken an oath learnt that they might evade their obligations… men to whom the blood of the kinsmen had been as their own began to shed it with impunity in the cause of God; … [how] lying and treachery in the cause of Islam received divine approval, hesitation to perjure oneself in that cause being represented as a weakness… [how] Moslems became distinguished by the obscenity of their language… [how] coveting of

goods and wives (possessed by Unbelievers) was avowed without discouragement from the Prophet[19]."

It is evident from above instances, which are not exhaustive, that a systematic bias has been introduced in the NCERT historytextbooks against Brahmans. This demeaning of Brahmans is further accentuated in pupils'minds when juxtaposed with how the NCERT authors incorrectly place Islamic theologians on a higher pedestal.

Jesuits

When the narrative concerns ancient India, the emphasis is always on divisiveness. The villainous architects of such 'divisions' are always Brahmans, who were always trying to amass wealth and exploit women and other 'castes'. However, this depiction by NCERT authors does not match the ideal code of conduct that Brahmans put into practice:

"According to seers, there are four kinds of life styles for the worldly Brahmans – according to the first, he can store an attic full of grains; storing a bowl full of grains is the second; storing just as much grain which will last for one day is the third; living as it comes (i.e. no storage) is the fourth. Out of these four, the second and third are superior when compared with the first. The one who follows the fourth

[19] (Mohammed and the Rise of Islam, p. 149)

type is considered to be the best. The Brahman following the first should be involvedinconducting pious deeds, studying, teaching, donating and accepting alms."[20]

True to the NCERT template of vilifying Brahmans and elevating non-Indic theologians, they portray Jesuits and Society of Jesus in their characteristic style:—

"The Catholic Church itself did not escape the impact of these ideas and began to reform itself from within. In Spain and in Italy, churchmen emphasized the need for a simple life and service to the poor. In Spain, Ignatius Loyola, in an attempt to combat Protestantism, set up the Society of

Jesus in 1540. His followers were called Jesuits, whose mission was to serve the poor and to widen their knowledge of other cultures."

NCERT, class 11th, p 164

Notice the judicious use of virtue words like 'serve the poor' and 'widen their knowledge' for Christian missionaries. There is not a single place in NCERT books where such phrases are used for Brahmans. The truth is that soon after its inception, the Society of Jesus became a suspect even in the eyes of other Christian sects. It was partly due to the tactics that were used by the members of this society and partly due to the large amount of wealth that this society acquired in very short time. Yet, NCERT authors are presenting Society of Jesus in flowery language. In 1542, when Francis Xavier landed in Goa, he was the first Jesuit todo so. Though he lived here for a short time before moving on to China, he had kick-started the activities of his sect here. Within twenty years, the Jesuits started sending dispatches of their exploits regarding conversion of Hindus. They tell, for instance, how in 1559 they

[20] (Mahabharat, pp. 755-756, volume 5)

made a descent, with an accompanying troop of soldiers, on an island whose Hindu inhabitants had long resisted baptism. The natives were held up by the troops, and their leaders were put in irons and told that they were to be deported. In the circumstances they professed themselves eager to be baptized, and the sacred rite and a good dinner were at once bestowed on five hundred "converts." The Portuguese authority was the chief agency on which the missionaries relied. The most tempting privileges were granted to converts; the administrative offices which the Hindoo clergy had exercised for ages were transferred to the Jesuits; and in 1557 even the tribunal of the Inquisition was set up by them in India[21]. The draconianlaws, whichwere enacted inthe Portuguese dominions at the behest of Jesuits, included taking over of the properties of Hindus, Muhammadans and Jews who were suspected of heresy. Since the means were questionable, the results were also dismal. The civil power of the European powers supported them due to

which their preaching continued to augment the number, and restrain the quality, of the converts[22].

Here we are taking a little digression from the history of Jesuits to bring to light another trick of NCERT authors. To show Christianity as a progressive ideology, all its core dogmas are obscured from the sight of students. The fact that scientists, rationalists and mystics were harangued, persecuted and even killed by the Church does not even find a passing reference in textbooks. How the truth is gleaned can be seen from the following passage: —

"Copernicus asserted that the planets, including the earth, rotate around the sun. *A devout Christian*, Copernicus was afraid of the possible reaction to his theory by traditionalist clergymen. For this reason, he did not want his manuscript,

[21] (A Candid History of Jesuits, pp. 77-78)
[22] (ibid, p. 103)

De revolutionibus (The Rotation) to be printed. On his deathbed, he gave it to his follower, Joachim Rheticus. It took time for people to accept this idea. It was much later – more than half a century later, in fact – that the difference between 'heaven' and earth was bridged through the writings of astronomers like Johannes Kepler (1571-1630) and Galileo Galilei (1564-1642). The theory of the earth as part of a suncentred system was made popular by Kepler's Cosmographical Mystery, which demonstrated that the planets move around the sun not in circles but in ellipses.

Galileo confirmed the notion of the dynamic world in his work The Motion. This revolution in science reached its climax with Isaac Newton's theory of gravitation."

NCERT, class 11th, p 165

Notice sleight of hand: that the reaction could be only from 'traditionalist clergymen', he did not 'want' his manuscript to be published; it took 'people

some time'to accept this idea. Also notice the virtue word 'devout Christian.'

The fact, however, is that the theory of Copernicus was in direct confrontation with the Biblical cosmology. He could not dare to publish it as the consequences would not have been a 'reaction' by some obscure 'traditionalist clergyman', but an order would have come from the authority of Pope himself, and the order in all probability would have been burning of the scientist at stake. That is exactly what happened to another scientist who was not as circumspect as Copernicus.

Giardano Bruno, born as Phillipo Bruno in 1548, was a Dominican Friar, a philosopher and a mathematician. He was inspired by the ideas of Copernicus but was not as coy as him. The word went out that this mathematician held views that were against the biblical doctrines. Bruno got the wind of his impending arrest and starting wandering in Europe to evade the dreaded tribunal of Inquisition. He had applied for a post of mathematics chair in Padua, Italy. He was arrested in 1592 by Inquisitors and the charges made against him bythe Church included claiming existence of plurality of worlds and their eternity, holding opinions contrary to the Catholic faith pertaining to Jesus Christ and virginityof Mary, the mother of Christ. His trial lasted for seven years and finally in 1600, he was burnt at stake in a market square of Rome. His tongue was imprisoned because of his wicked words. His trial was overseen by Inquisitor Cardinal Bellarmine who laid the condition of full recantation on part of Bruno to spare his life. Bruno was too proud of the soundness of his stance that he refused to stoop so low. He had to pay the price of taking on Christianity with his life.

This same Cardinal was also responsible for the arrest and maltreatment of Galileo for his scientific temperament that was against the doctrines of Christianity. The chair to which Bruno had applied was denied to him, but one year later it was Galileo who occupied it. When Christian theologians got the wind of Galileo's activities that he was surreptitiously teaching his students about the planetary model, as Bruno had done, he had to face the wrath of theologians. He was also given the same option: a full recantation. Galileo knew what was in store for him if he did not comply with diktats of

the Church, therefore, he obeyed and went through the indignationofrecanting his scientific temperament in full public view.

Our NCERT authors have not brought this fact to the knowledge of our children, but have tried to present a healthy relation between Galileo and Christianity by using a one-liner:

“Galileo once remarked that the Bible that lights the road to heaven does not say much on how the heavens work.”

NCERT, class 11th, p 166 A child unaware of the last few years of Galileo’s life would be forced to believe that he was a fan of the Christian doctrine. World historycanbe made far more informative for our childrenbyincluding passages explaining the last years of Galileo. But since these incidents portray Christianity in its true colours, these are glossed over. On the contrary, the authors try to associate unnecessary words like ‘devout Christian’ with Copernicus.

The reason we digressed from the story of Jesuits is that the next part concerns Cardinal Bellarmine. He had a nephew named Robert Di Nobili who is another interesting character in the Indian history. He is mentioned in NCERT books in a single passage:

“Once the Portuguese arrived in India inabout 1500, a number of them wrote detailed accounts regarding Indian social customs and religious practices. A few of them, such as the Jesuit Roberto Nobili, even translated Indian texts into European languages.”

NCERT, class 12th, p 122

This brief account of Nobiliis presented in a neutral manner although he deserves a little more ink and space. He is considered one of the ‘adorable’ Jesuits. The dubious life that he led in India and the contemptible tricks he used to convert Hindus to Christianity can throw more light on the ethics of Jesuits.

Although NCERT authors want us to believe that Brahmans were wily beings who had created a discriminatory social structure and imposed it on unsuspecting population, Nobili knew the truth. During his interaction with Hindus, he found out that Brahmans were highly respected for their frugal lifestyle and altruistic nature. He devised a plan to deceive Hindus. He started impersonating Brahmans in order to convert local population. His activities are a part of missionary lore. It is best that we reproduce the original text: *McCabe* "An amusing instance of this readiness to adopt questionable,*on*

Nobili and even downright dishonest, practices in the service of

religion is furnished bythe mission to the Hindoos. It appears that after all the hundred years of activity in India, with a free and not very delicate use of the Portuguese authority, the results were regarded as meagre and unsatisfactory. Hitherto we have heard nothing but most optimistic accounts of the work of the missionaries in India; but when the hour comes, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, for justifying a new and strange policy, the Jesuits tell us that the effect of the older policy had been slight, and that the highcaste Hindoos smiled with disdain on the crowds of ignorant natives who had, on one pretext or other, accepted baptism. In 1605 the Jesuit Robert de Nobili, an Italian of noble birth and a nephew of Bellarmine, joined the Indian mission and initiated the new policy. Isolating himself from his colleagues before he became known in India, he made a very close study of the customs and sacred writings of the higher caste Hindoos, learned Tamil and Sanscrit, and after a few years appeared before the people of India as a member of the penitential (or highest) caste of the Saniassi.

He lived apart, in a turf hut, and abstained rigorously from flesh and fish. His head was shaved, save for a single tuft of hair, and he had the yellow mark of the caste on his forehead. Dressed in a flame-coloured robe and tiger-skin, with the peculiar wooden sandals of the caste on his feet, he posed in all things as one of the devout Saniassi, and attracted the veneration of the natives. The Brahmans naturally suspected this mysterious addition to their brotherhood, and came to interrogate him. He took oath that he was of high caste —a quite innocent thing, the Jesuit apologists say, Since he was a

McCabe noble by birth — and produced as document certifying that *on Nobili* he was the Tatuva Podagar Swami whom he pretended to

be. This document was itself a gross imposture, and we may be further quite sure that the Brahmans would not pass him, as they did, until he had made very plain professions of belief in the Vedas and the Hindoo gods, and practiced the idolatrous rites of his adopted caste. For a time he lived apart, and was content to edify by the austerity of his life. Then, like his forerunner, the Swedish Jesuit Nicolai, he began to attract a few impressible Brahmans, and cautiouslyto initiate them to the Christian faith. Other missionaries were now aware of this action, and he was summoned to appear before the archbishop at Goa. From Goa he was, in 1618, sent to justify his conduct before the Inquisition at Rome; and many of his own brethren, including his learned uncle, were scandalised at his flame-coloured robe and painted brow. He maintained that there was no superstition whatever in the practices of the saniassi, and he actually obtained permission from the Pope to return and continue his work on the understanding that the peculiarities of his dress and the rites of his caste had no more than a civic and sanitary significance! Other members of the Society now followed his example, and the imposture continued throughout the seventeenth century.At his death in 1656 it was claimed that Robert had made 100,000 high-caste converts, and that one of his colleagues had made 30,000. In a more precise document, however, we read, at a later date, that one of the most insidious of these Jesuit saniassis baptized nine Brahmans in eight months, and that this was more than his colleagues had done in ten years. The whole questionable episode was little more than an indulgence in the romantic adventure to which his diplomatic principles always disposed the Jesuit. He instinctivelyloved disguise and palliated deceit. The work in India continued on the old lines. Thousands of children were stealthily baptized, to swell the lists published in Europe; the favour and wealth of the Portuguese were assiduously used; and, as we gather from the letters sent to Europe, a great deal of trickery was employed in order to make the ignorant natives believe that the Jesuits could work miracles and control devils. Coloured lights were cunningly placed at times so as to shine on their statues and altars and create a belief in miracles[23].”

Notice the words used by European scholars to define the acts of Jesuits:‘questionable’, ‘downright dishonest’,‘imposture’, ‘insidious’, ‘adventure’, ‘deceit’, ‘stealth’, ‘trickery’, ‘cunning’.And what was the need of going through such elaborate charades? Because these bigots had to convert Hindus!Where was the ‘appealof Christianity’ that the NCERT authors are so grandiosely proclaiming?

The Jesuits, going by NCERT, ‘whose mission was to serve the poor and to widen their knowledge of other cultures’, were not only fraudsters, but they could also murder if the need so arose.

“In India and China, in England and Sweden, they assumed a right to lie in the service of God; and in the same high cause they counselled or connived at murder, slandered their fellow-priests, violated their sacred obligations, fostered wars, and accommodated the Christian ethic to the passions of wealthy or influential sinners. It was never necessary for a Jesuit theologian to declare that “the end justifies the means[24].”

[23] (McCabe, pp. 188-190) [24] (ibid, p. 197)

Had a Buddhist, Jain or Brahman shown such a hideous character, he would be renounced as an unethical scoundrel by the general public as well as other members of his class. But, the mere fact that this Robert di Nobili is celebrated as a pioneer and is found worth emulating should tell the readers much about the character of Christian missionaries in general and Jesuits in particular. Alarge number of ‘Fathers’ copied the tactics of Nobili and succeeded him inthis ‘fantastic role’. It is interesting to note that like the missionaries, the NCERT authors also keep Nobili on a pedestal. They find him worthy of a mention in the textbooks and also sanitise his dubious actions. It serves the dual purpose of glorifying Nobili as well as Jesuits.

Who were the villains?

Every aspect that can elevate the prestige of Brahmans in the eyes of students is underplayed or given a reductionist treatment. Brahmans were held in high esteem for their wisdom and altruistic lifestyle by not only Indians but every foreign visitor was impressed by virtue of Brahmans:

“Their knowledge of Sanskrit texts earned the Brahmanas a lot of respect in society. Their dominant position was consolidated by the support of their patrons – new rulers searching for prestige.”

NCERT, class 7th, p 11

A student of class 7th is forced to learn that the Brahmans were respected not for their moral values, their piety, their altruism or their frugal lifestyle, but just for their “knowledge of Sanskrit texts”. In contrast, by the time the student reaches class 12th, he learns that Sheikhs, Sufis, Ulama and Jesuits were respected for their virtues:
“The Chishtis accepted donations in cash and kind. Rather than accumulate donations, they preferred to use these fully on immediate requirements such as food, clothes, living quarters and ritual necessities (such as sama’). All this enhanced the moral authority of the *shaikhs*, which in turn attracted people from all walks of life. Further, their miraculous powers made sufis popular among the masses, whose support kings wished to secure.”

NCERT, class 12th, p 159

A very large section of population in our country, even those who are aware of Islamic doctrine, are duped into believing that Sufis were secular in their outlook and had a benevolent approach towards Indic population. The historical records do not favour this assumption. Barring a few exceptions, most Sufis were as fanatic as any Jihadi could be. One of the most revered Sufi in India, who is portrayed as a symbol of eclectic nature of Sufism is Moinuddin Chishti whose dargah is situated inAjmer. He has been eulogised in NCERT books—

“For more than seven centuries people of various creeds, classes and social backgrounds have expressed their devotion at the *dargahs* of the five great Chishti saints (see chart on p.154). Amongst these, the most revered shrine is that of Khwaja Muinuddin, popularly known as “Gharib Nawaz” (comforter of the poor). The earliest textual references to Khwaja Muinuddin’s *dargah* date to the fourteenth century. It was *evidently* popular because of the

austerity and piety of its Shaikh, the greatness of his spiritual successors, and the patronage of royal visitors."

NCERT, class 12th, p 155

However, the Muslim records, written in gloryof Moinuddin, present an entirely different picture. The medieval chroniclers or historians took pleasure in highlighting the destruction of temples and rape of captured non-Muslim women as 'achievements' of their 'holy' men. These chroniclers meticulously recorded such incidents to further accentuate the status of Sufis among the believers. The following extract belongs to a work called SiyarAlAktab that was compiled by a Sufi called Allah Diya Chishti. It is a compilation of the deeds of Chishti Sufis.

"Although at that time there were very many temples of idols around the lake, when the Khwaja saw them, he said: 'If God and His Prophet so will, it will not be long before I raze to the ground these idol temples.'

"It is said that among those temples there was one temple to reverence which the Rãjã and all the infidels used to come, and lands had been assigned to provide for its expenditure. When the Khwãja settled there, everydayhis servants bought a cow, brought it there and slaughtered it and ate it…

"So when the infidels grew weak and saw that they had no power to resist such a perfect companion of God, they… went into their idol temples which were their places of worship. In them there was a dev, in front of whom they cried out and asked for help…The dev who was their leader, when he saw the perfect beauty of the Khwãja, trembled from head to foot like a willow tree. However much he tried to say 'Ram, Ram', it was 'Rahîm, Rahîm' that came from his tongue… The Khwãja… with his own hand gave a cup of water to a servant to take to the dev… He had no sooner drunk it than his heart was purified of darkness of unbelief, he ran forward and fell at the Heaven-treading feet of the Khwãja, and professed his belief…The Khwãja said: 'I also bestow on you the name of Shãdî Dev [Joyful Deval]'…Then Shadî Dev… suggested to the Khwãja, that he should now set up a place in the city, where the populace might benefit from his holy arrival. The Khwãja accepted this suggestion, and ordered one of his special servants called

Muhammad Yãdgîr to go into the city and set in good order a place for faqîrs. Muhammad Yãdgîr carried out his orders, and when he had gone into the city, he liked well the place where the radiant tomb of the Khwãja now is, and which originally belonged to Shãdî Dev, and he suggested that the Khwãja should favour it with his residence[25]."

Thus, his dargahis an example of iconoclasm whilst NCERT authors are presenting it as an example of co-existence. But, there is a more sinister aspect of this Khwaja. As explained in the section 'DepictionofWomen', Muhammad, theArabianProphet, kept infidel women kidnapped from raids.All the actions of Prophet are called Sunnat.All Muslim men are supposed to follow him in all respects as he is considered an ideal example. According to Qur'an:—

"Indeed in the Messenger ofAllah (Muhammad) you have a good example to follow for him who hopes in (the Meeting with)Allah and the Last Day and remembers Allah much[26]."

Since Moinuddin Chishti considered himself to be a pious Muslim, he wanted to emulate the Prophet. How the 'Garib Nawaz' fulfilled this objective is also explained:—

"Mu'în al-dîn had a second wife for the following reason: one night he saw the Holy Prophet in the flesh. The prophet said: 'You are not truly of my religion if you depart in any way from my sunnat.' It happened that the ruler of the Patli fort, Malik Khitãb, attacked the unbelievers that night and captured the daughter of the Rãjã of that land. He presented

[25] (Goel, Hindu Temples: What Happened to Them, Volume 2, p.130) [26] (Qur'an 33:21)

her to Mu'în al-dîn who accepted her and named her Bîbî Umiya[27]."

In plain words, a hapless woman was captured after killing her family members and gifted to a bigot for perpetual sex slavery. But, the NCERT propagandist spins a Sufi into a hero.

As seen earlier, the NCERT authors diligently portray Brahmans as wily and greedy using their "knowledge of Sanskrit scriptures" to hoard wealth

through “gifts”. Same authors brazenly assert that Sufis led an austere life and did not have any attraction for wealth or political power, anassertion which is contradictoryto the historical facts. The fact is that Sufis were deeply entrenched in the political system. Political connections were frequently cemented by matrimonial alliances between Sufis and Muslim rulers. They were provided sprawling Khanqahs (estates) by the Islamic rulers and were key advisers to the Muslim kings. They also played a crucial role in the formation of new dynasties and legitimsing Muslim kingdoms. In the process they frequently changed loyalties in lieu of better privileges and bigger estates.

A perfect example is the case of Siraj al Din Junaidi, who switched his loyaltyfrom Tughluq to Bahmani sultans:—

“One of the first Sufis to become closely associated with the Bahmani court was Shaikh Siraj al Din Junaidi. Born in Peshawar, Siraj al Din had accompanied Muhammad bin Tughluq to the Deccan and settled in the city of Bijapur in 1330.About this time, too, he became the spiritual guide to the future founder of the Bahmani Kingdom, ‘Ala al Din Hasan. It was Siraj al Din, in fact, who crowned the new king at the royal coronation on 3 August 1347. In return for

27 27 131)

the Sufi’s continued blessings and prayers for the sultan’s long life, Siraj al Din received what was perhaps the first land grant ever given to a Deccani Sufi – the village of Korchi, which has continued into this century in the hands of his descendants…So close were Sufi–court relations during the earlyBahmani period thatAla al din’s successor Muhammad Shah Bahmani, was able to obtain a declaration of allegiance from virtually all the sufis of the kingdom.

Chishti’s association with the Bahmani court was intensified by another prominent sufi of the time, indeed the best known Muslim divine of the Deccan history, Saiyid Muhammad Husaini Bandanawaz Gisudaraz…

…When Gisudaraz arrived at Gulbarga the reigning monarch, SultanFiruz Bahmani, sought him out and granted him several villages in in’am (tax free land)…[28]"

While the historical facts clearly expound that the Sufis seldom kept distance from the seat of power, and presided over large estates, but for the NCERT authors, the altruistic Brahmans were greedy and wealth hoarders.

Depicting meritocracy as nepotism

NCERT authors put lot of effort inthe selection of words to denigrate Brahmans. Since 'caste system' has to be portrayed as rigid and frozen in time, words like 'framework' are used.

"SOCIAL DIFFERENCES: WITHIN AND BEYOND THE FRAMEWORK OF CASTE – You are probably familiar with the term caste, which refers to a set of hierarchically ordered social categories. The ideal order was laid down in the Dharmasutras and Dharmashastras.

[28] (Sufis of Bijapur, pp. 49-52)

Brahmanas claimed that this order, in which theywere ranked first, was divinely ordained, while placing groups classified as Shudras and "untouchables" at the very bottom of the social order. Positions within the order were *supposedly* determined by birth."

NCERT, class 12th, p 61

Although NCERT experts do a lot of hairsplitting on various topics mentioned in Mahabharat, they apparently fail to see those sections of the epic that clearly state that the categories of 'Varn'are based on the nature, attitude, aptitude and merit of the person.

"Rishi Bhrigu says: One who is pure, busies himself in the study of Vedas and has undergone the 'sanskars' like Jaatkarm etc, who sticks to six deeds, maintains hygiene, has good conduct and partakes clean food, has attachment to his Guru, is always truthful and follows the 'nitya vrats' is known as a Brahman.

One who is truthful, donates alms, is free of hatred, is free of cruelty, is full of compassion, decency and tapas; is called a Brahman due to these qualities.

One who fulfills the 'Kshatriya'duties like war, who studies Veds, who donates alms to Brahmans, one who protects the population by taking tax from them is called a Kshatriya.

Similarly, who studies Vedas, does business, takes to animal husbandryand agricultural activities, stores grains and remains hygienic is called a Vaishya.

But the one who discards Veds and good conduct, has propensity of eating anything anytime, can undertake any kind of deed and remains unhygienic from outside and within is called a Shudra. The above-mentioned qualities like truthfulness etc., if they are present in a Shudra and are missing in a Brahman, then the Brahman is not a Brahman and the Shudra is not a Shudra[29]."

Educating the students about this merit-based system of ancient Indic society, as enshrined in 'Brahmanical texts' of Mahabharat, would be detrimental to the NCERT authors'divisive agenda. So, instead of it, theytransform Varna into caste and replace meritocracy with a 'birth-based oppressive system'.

"The "right" occupation – The Dharmasutras and Dharmashastras also contained rules about the ideal "occupations" of the four categories or *varnas*. Brahmanas were supposed to study and teach the Vedas, perform sacrifices and get sacrifices performed, and give and receive gifts. Kshatriyas were to engage in warfare, protect people and administer justice, study the Vedas, get sacrifices performed, and make gifts. The last three "occupations" were also assigned to the Vaishyas, who were in addition

expected to engage in agriculture, pastoralism and trade. Shudras were assigned only one occupation – that of serving the three "higher" *varnas*. The *Brahmanas evolved two or three strategies* for enforcing these norms. One, as we have just seen, was to assert that the *varna* order was of divine origin. Second, they advised kings to ensure that these norms were followed within their kingdoms. And third, *they attempted to persuade people that their status was determined by birth*. However, this was not always easy. So prescriptions were often reinforced by stories told in the *Mahabharata* and other texts." NCERT, class 12th, p 61

[29] (Mahabharat, vol5, pp. 573-574)

Before we move on to the 'prescriptions' that were reinforced, let us understand the stance of Mahabharat on Shudras. In the voluminous corpus of Mahabharat, there are several instances where duties and roles of different sections of societyare discussed. The division of labour is associated with merit and propensityof the individual. It clearly states that if a Shudra is unable to earn a living by rendering services, he may opt for business, animal husbandry or artistic vocations[30].
Similarly, although our learned historians at NCERT are repeatedly proclaiming that Shudras were excluded from yajnas, we would like to draw their attention to the injunctions in Mahabharat that the performance of yagyas is prescribed as compulsory for all the four Varnas. Furthermore, since a shudra facilitates the three other varnas by his services, therefore, the yagya belongs to him also i.e. he does not have to perform a yagya separately for himself. As in all the 'yajnas', devotion is the first requirement, Brahman is considered a visible devta. All the varnas co-operate with their respective contributions[31].

"O King! The best recourse for a Shudra is rendering services to the other three 'varnas'. If Shudras stick to their servile propensity, it makes them pious.
If a Shudra does not have a source of living which he has inherited, then he need not try his hands at any other activity. He should use his good services to secure his livelihood." [Verses 1-2, chapter 292, Shanti parv]
"A Brahman by his control over his senses, a Kshatriya by his victories in war, a Vaishya by his honestly earned money and a Shudra byhis excellence in service are always praised." [Verses 21, chapter 292, Shanti parv]

[30] (ibid. p. 913)
[31] (ibid. p. 197)

"The learned men say that if a Shudra approaches a 'dwij', the 'dwij' must arrange livelihood for the Shudra. If someone dies without a child, then the Shudra who used to serve him is entitled to do perform 'pind-daan' for the departed[32]."

Even metaphoric hymns are twisted to cite them as an example of deviousness of Brahmans. For instance, the famous Purush Sukt is used to depict as if it were a source of discrimination.

"To justify their claims, Brahmanas often cited a verse from a hymn in the Rigveda knownas the Purusha sukta, describing the sacrifice of Purusha, the primeval man. All the elements of the universe, including the four social categories, were supposed to have emanated from his body: The Brahmana was his mouth, of his arms was made the Kshatriya. His thighs became the Vaishya, of his feet the

Shudra was born. It is followed by teaser – Why do you think the Brahmanas quoted this verse frequently?"

NCERT, class 12th, p 61

Even figurative text is given a spin to depict that since Shudra have originated from feet, it is an indication that they have a lowly status. At the same time, texts like BrihadaranyakUpanishad, which present Shudra as nourisher, are not mentioned. Shudra as a varn is equated with earth, since they also nourish, therefore, Shudra is called i w"kk or the one who nourishes[33]. In praise of Shudra it is said that "Brahm was unable to function therefore he created Shudra Varn". One of the most revered sages, one who was quoted by Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar in his campaign for the rights of women, is Sage Parashar. According to the nomenclature of NCERT, he is a Brahman and author of numerous injunctions in 'Sanskrit'. This very Brahman claims in Mahabharat:

[32] (ibid. p. 197)

[33] (Brihadaranyak Upanishad 1:4:13)

"Those who are learned in Vedas proclaim that a Shudra is equivalent to Prajapati as he brings up the entire population by his care; but O King of Kings! I see a Shudra as an image of the supreme protector Vishnu as it is the duty of Vishnu to nourish the population[34]."

Notice that a Shudra is being compared to Prajapati Brahma, as well as Vishnu, the two supreme deities of Hinduism. It is specified that even a Shudra can get out of his predicament with good deeds.

A divine order?

Amore sinister aspect of NCERT authors is their partialityin raising questions. Every aspect related to ancient India has been vilified by portraying it as highlydiscriminatory, while there is no criticalanalysis of other ideologies. For example, while discussing the abovementioned 'Purush Sukta', the title of the paragraph is "A divine order?"

Contrast it with the matter-of-fact manner in which the highly incredulous claim ofArabian prophet is depicted.

"Around 612, Muhammad declared himself to be the messenger (rasul) of God who had been commanded to preach thatAllah alone should be worshipped."

NCERT, class 11th, p 79

If there is a question mark on the divine claim of Brahmans, then why is it not on the claim of prophethood? Why is there no critical analysis of the exclusive nature of Allah? What is wrong with the worship of Krishn or Shiv or Jesus?

The doublespeak becomes even more pronounced when the subsequent lines say that:

[34] (Mahabharat, volume 5, p. 920)

"The worship involved simple rituals, such as daily prayers (salat), and moral principles, such as distributing alms and abstaining from theft."

NCERT, class 11th, p 79

What moral principles is the author talking about? Is it about the murder of non-Muslims? Or is it about kidnap and rape of the Kafir women?

Going ahead, the authors resort to total hogwash:

"Those who accepted the doctrine were called Muslims. They were promised salvation on the day of judgement (qiyama) and a share of the resources of the community while on earth."

NCERT, class 11th, p 79

Irony of the above claim is that the Muslims were promised a share of the resources but these were not from the 'community', but from 'non-Muslims'; another act of sanitisation by the NCERT. The number of Muslims grew phenomenally due to the added attraction of 'Anfal', which is the Arabic term for war booty. The Prophet had declared that only those persons will be allowed a share from the loot who will become Muslim. This aspect of Islam is highlighted byAnwar Sheikh:

"The battle of Honein, which was fought on February 1, 630 A.D. yielded the following booty:

"24000 camels, 40000 sheep and goats, 4,000 ounces ofsilver and 6,000 prisoners. Theywere removed to the neighbouring valley ofAl-Jirana, and sheltered there, awaiting the return of the army from At-Taif."

Citizens ofAt-Taif held out bravely but when Muhammad's armystarted destroying their famous vineyards, which formed the backbone of their economy, they surrendered but the time that this process took was too long for the soldiers of Allah to wait for their share of the plunder. Having agreed the restoration of prisoners to their relatives, as Muhammad mounted his camel and proceeded to his tent, further waiting proved very trying for his followers, who wanted an immediate distribution of the booty. Barricading his way, they shouted: "Distribute to us the spoil – the camels and the flocks!"
"So rudely did they jostle him that he was driven to seek refuge under a tree, with his mantle torn from his shoulders… 'return to me my mantle, O man:' cried Muhammad, who had now secured a more free position, extricating himself with some difficulty from the crush: - return my mantle: for I swear by the Lord that if the sheep and the camels were as many as the trees of the forest in number, I would divide them all amongst you. Ye have not heretofore found me niggardly or false."
"Then plucking from his camel's hump a hair, he held it aloft, and said, 'even to a hair like this, I would keep back naught but the fifth; and even that I will divide amongst you.' They were pacified, and Muhammad went on his way."

From the above quotation, it is quite clear that the followers of Muhammad joined him in his invasions not to enforce good but to secure plunder; their greed is demonstrated by their rude treatment of the prophet[35]."

Land grants
Brahmans were to follow the 'dos and don'ts' or ; e&fu; e as prescribed bythe scriptures. Kings were supposed to provide shelter [35] (Islam: Sex and Violence, pp. 20-21)

and protection to Brahmans since they themselves lacked any resources to implement measures for social welfare. With mischievous use of words, the NCERT books are trying to project Brahmans as

some kind of land sharks who used to grab property by coercing kings to donate lands to them.

“Each brahmadeya was looked after byan assembly or sabha of prominent Brahmana landholders.”

NCERT, class 7th, p 26 “Their basically equal society gradually got divided into unequal social classes. Brahmanas received land grants from Gond rajas and became more influential. The Gond chiefs now wished to be recognised as Rajputs.”

NCERT, class 7th, p 98

“During the first half of the seventeenth century, however, the influence of Brahmanas increased. Temples and Brahmanas were granted land by the king. In the reign of Sib Singh, Hinduism became the predominant religion.”

NCERT, class 7th, p 100

“But the poor, the people from low castes, saw this as an opportunity to get away from the oppressive hold that upper caste landowners exercised over their lives and the daily humiliation they suffered.”

NCERT, class 8th, p 115 “Land grants and new rural elites
From the early centuries of the Common Era, we find grants of land being made, many of which were recorded in inscriptions. Some of these inscriptions were on stone, but most were on copper plates (Fig. 2.13) which were probably given as a record of the transaction to those who received the land. The records that have survived are generally about grants to religious institutions or to Brahmanas… The inscription also gives us an idea about rural populations – these included Brahmanas and peasants, as well as others who were expected to provide a range of produce to the king or his representatives.And according to the inscription, they would have to obey the new lord of the village, and perhaps pay him all these dues.”

NCERT, class 12th, p 40

The NCERT authors from classes 7th to 12th incessantly flood students’ minds with the idea that ‘Brahmanistic imperialism’ spread through land grants to Brahmans. As seen earlier, there is no correlation between land grants and the alleged Brahmanistic hegemony. The Ulama, Sufis, Saiyyads and Sheikhs were at the vanguard of Islamic imperialism as it made its forays into India. Wherever the Muslim armies were able to establish considerable control over the local populace, the Islamic theologians were handsomely rewarded.

NCERT completely glosses over how Islamic clergy was given land grants to spread tentacles of Islamic colonialism. MaulaviAbdus Salam gives descriptionofland grants given byJihadi rulers tovarious Islamic theologians.

“Besides the “Jagirs” or “Iqtas” or “tiyuls”, there was another class of land-tenures, which were conferred for benevolent purposes, were hereditary (unlike Jagirs), and free from revenue and cesses, and imposed no obligations for military or other services. These before Mughal times were called milk, madad-i-mash, ayema and altamghah, but were denominated in Mughal times by the Chaghtai word “Sayurghal.”An officer called Sadr-i-Jahan, orAdministratorGeneral, was in charge of these Sayurghals. These were conferred on the following four classes of persons: (1) On enquirers after

wisdom who have withdrawn from worldly occupations and make no difference between night and day in searching after knowledge"; (2) on such as practice selfdenial and have renounced society of men; (3) on such as are weak and poor and have no strength for enquiry; (4) on honourable men of gentle birth who from want of knowledge are unable to take up a profession."

"Sher Shah was very liberal in conferring these aimahs and altamghas, which, however, were considerably resumed by Akbar who, on account of his hatred of the Ulama, deprived them of their madad-i-mash lands, and banished most of them to Bengal.

Altamgha, a Turkish word meant a ' red royal seal or stamp 'and also a 'royal grant' of rent-free tenure, which was perpetual, hereditary, and transferable. (SeeAin, Vol. IT, p. 57 n). In founding this system of Sayurghals or Altamghas, the Musalman Rulers were actuated bya desire to perpetuate the three aristocracies of birth, of character, and of intellect[36]."

Instead of highlighting this aspect, which led to a burgeoning class of theologians that was sucking up resources of the state in order to proselytize the peaceful citizens of India, the NCERT books present an altogether distorted version of history.

"Ulama (plural of alim, or one who knows) are scholars of Islamic studies. As preservers of this tradition they perform various religious, juridical and teaching functions."

NCERT, class 12th, p 147

Notice the contrasting depiction with respect to Brahmans. The authors who have not a single word in praise of Brahmans use a flowery language to create a perception that Ulama, as a class, are

[36] (Riyaz-us-Salatin, p. 244)

a boon to humanity. The truth, however, is different. The Muslim rule during the medieval era was a theocratic rule. All the Ulama in the region were led by senior-most amongst them; he was titled Sheikh Ul Islam. It was this very class that would never let the theocratic nature of the ruler relax. The advice of theologian was based on Qur'anic injunctions. The Ulama stressed every sinew to exhort the Muslim rulers for use of sword to annihilate Hinduism in Hindustan. The role that this class played can be understood from the example of Sayyid Nur ad Din Mubarak Ghaznawi Suharwardi, who was the Sheikh ul Islam during the reign of Iltutmish. He is considered a leading Sufi of Suharwardi Silsila. He led a delegation to the Sultan and advised him to give an ultimatum to the Hindus to embrace Islam or face death. The prime minister of Sultan pleaded powerlessness on his behalf to do so.Asimilar delegation was taken to Jalaluddin Khilji who was more forthright in explaining his helplessness in face of sheer numbers and grit of Hindus. He said:–

"Don't you see that Hindus, who are the worst enemies of God and of Islam, pass daily below my royal palace to the Jamuna beating drums and playing flutes, and practice before our eyes the worship of the idols with all the rituals? Fie on us unworthy leaders who declare ourselves Muslim kings!...Had I been a Muslim ruler, a real king, or a prince and felt myself strong and powerful enough to protect Islam, any enemy of God and the faith of the Prophet of Islam would not have been allowed to chew betels in a carefree manner and put on a clean garment or live in peace[37].

These bigots, who led a luxurious life in sprawling khanqahs and mosques, are depicted with words like ‘scholars’ and ‘preservers of tradition’, but Brahmans, who led a frugal life and toiled for the masses, are demonised.

[37] (Myths of Composite Culture and Equality of Religions, p. 10)

What is Shari’a?
Similar deception is used to portray the Islamic system of jurisprudence.

“The shari’a is the law governing the Muslim community. It is based on the Qur’an and the hadis, traditions of the Prophet including a record of his remembered words and deeds. With the expansion of Islamic rule outsideArabia, in areas where customs and traditions were different, qiyas (reasoning by analogy) and ijma (consensus of the community) were recognised as two other sources of legislation. Thus, the shari’a evolved from the Qur’an, hadis, qiyas and ijma.”

NCERT, class 12th, p 149

Shari’a is not a law that deals with Muslim communityonly, it deals with all communities. As a matter of fact, it considers all other religions and all other Gods exceptAllah as ‘false’.

Ironically, the system that the NCERT authors are trying to camouflage considers Hindus as unworthy of living. Most of the Ulama and Sufis felt that according to Shari’a, Hindus should be killed as they cannot be considered even zimmis. They felt that only Jews and Christians can be allowed to survive by the payment of humiliating tax Jizya due to their status of being ‘People of the Book’. But Hindus are ‘Mushriq’, the lowliest ofthe lowly, therefore, they must be killed.

Amir Khusro, a Sufi and Alim par excellence and a disciple of NizamuddinAuliya (considered one of the great sufis by many), is peddled as an ideal sufi with a secular outlook. Here are his words on Kafirs, as well as, the malevolence of Shari’a:—

“HappyHindustan, the splendour of Religion, where the Law finds perfect honour and security. In learning Dilli can now compete with Bokhara, for Islam has been made manifest by its kings. The whole country, by means of the sword of our holy warriors, has become like a forest denuded of its thorns by fire. The land has been saturated with the water of the sword, and the vapours of infidelity have been dispersed. The strong men of Hind have been trodden under foot, and all are ready to pay tribute. Islam is triumphant, idolatry is subdued. Had not the Law granted exemption from death by the payment of Jizya, the very name of Hind, root and branch, would have been extinguished[38].”

The Ulama were resenting the status of Zimmi being given to Hindus because they were talking of theory of Shari’a. But Sultans and kings knew that although they had somehow established a rule in Hindustan, Hindus were not accepting them as rulers. The gritty resistance and fight which Hindus presented was a practical reality, thus, they found them helpless in uprooting Hinduism. This was unlike Persia and Byzantine where entire populations were Islamised relatively easily, in a matter of a few decades. The Ulama expected a repeat performance in India also, but were frustrated. Yet, when it comes to Ulama and Shari’a, the NCERT authors make every effort to present both of them in glowing terms.

“As the religious and social experiences of the Muslims deepened through contact with other people, the community was obliged to reflect on itself and confront issues pertaining to God and the world.

What should be the ideal conduct of a Muslim in public and private? What is the object of Creation and how does one know what God wants from His creatures? How can one understand the mysteries of the universe? Answers to such questions came from *learned* Muslims who acquired and organised knowledge of different kinds to

[38] (Ashiqa: Amir Khusro, Elliot & Dowson, volume 3, p. 546)
strengthen the social identity of the community as well as to satisfy their intellectual curiosity."
NCERT, class 11th, p 95

How is it different from what Brahmans were doing in practice? Have they not been acquiring and organising knowledge? Were theynot learned? When Hinduism was struggling for survival under the onslaught of Jihad from Arabs, Turks and Mughals, were they not organising society?

What were the Brahmans up against?
The blood-filled history that the NCERT is trying to hide from the students tells us that Brahmans made every effort to keep the traditions and eclectic society alive. They did so at the peril of being brutallybutchered. One example from the Sultanate period will give an idea of the overwhelming odds that were stacked against Hindus in general and Brahmans in particular.

"A report was brought to the Sultan that there was in Dehli an old Brahman (zundr dar), who persisted in publicly performing the worship of idols in his house; and that the people of the city, both Musulmans and Hindus, used to resort to his house to worship the idol. This Brahman had constructed a wooden tablet (muhrak), which was covered withinand without withpaintings of demons and other objects. On days appointed, the infidels went to his house and worshipped the idol, without the fact becoming known to the public officers. The Sultan was informed that this Brahman had perverted Muhammadan women, and had led them to become infidels. An order was accordingly given that the Brahman, with his tablet, should be brought into the presence of the Sultan at Firozabad. The judges and Ulama and elders and lawyers were summoned, and the case of the Brahman was submitted for their opinion. Their reply was that the provisions of the Law were clear: the Brahman must either become a Musulman or be burned. The true faith was declared to the Brahman, and the right course pointed out, but he refused to accept it. Orders were given for raising a pile of faggots before the door of the darbar. The Brahman was tied hand and foot and cast into it; the tablet was thrown on the top and the pile was lighted. The writer of this book was present at the darbar and witnessed the execution. The tablet of the Brahman was lighted in two places, at his head and at his feet; the wood was dry, and the fire first reached his feet, and drew from him a cry, but the flames quickly enveloped his head and consumed him.
Behold the Sultan's strict adherence to Shari'a and rectitude, how he would not deviate in the least from its decrees[39]."

As this ghastly example demonstrates, the combination of Ulama and Shari'a declared death for anyone who was audacious enough to assert his right to live a dignified life. Shari'a was the theory,

Ulama were the catalyst for putting it into action through the kings.

It is not that the nature of either Shari'a or Ulama has changed today. The countries still under the sway of Islam are best places to see Shari'a and Ulama in action. The unchanging nature of either is due to the conservative belief that Qur'an is the word ofAllah and ipso facto unchangeable. The dutyof academicians and intellectuals is to inform the coming generations about the true character of

ideologies that are kept under wraps, away from public scrutiny. The NCERT books are doing just the opposite of it.

"For religious scholars (ulama), knowledge (ilm) derived from the Quran and the model behaviour of the Prophet (sunna) [39] (Tarikhe Firoz Shahi, p. 365)

was the only way to know the will of God and provide guidance in this world. The ulama in medieval times devoted themselves to writing tafsir and documenting Muhammad's authentic hadith. Some went on to prepare a body of laws or sharia (the straight path) to govern the relationship of Muslims with God through rituals (ibadat) and with the rest of the humanitythrough socialaffairs (muamalat). Inframing Islamic law, jurists also made use of reasoning (qiyas) since not everything was apparent in the Quran or hadith and life had become increasinglycomplex with urbanisation. Differences in the interpretation of the sources and methods of jurisprudence led to the formation of four schools of law (mazhab) in the eight and ninth centuries. These were the Maliki, Hanafi, Shafii and Hanbali schools, each named after a leading jurist (faqih), the last being the most conservative. The sharia provided guidance onall possible legalissues within Sunni society, though it was more precise on questions of personal status (marriage, divorce and inheritance) than on commercial matters or penal and constitutional issues."

NCERT, class 11th, p 95 **Sufis in their true elements**

Sufis are generally perceived as all embracing, pluralistic, secular and pious individuals. In popular imagination, the word Sufi elicits an image of an old man, with a flowing white beard in a state of ecstasy. This image is result of a dishonest and disproportionate portrayal. Historical fact is that majority of them were either Jihadi warriors or bigoted proselytizers. Before we bring to light the true nature of Sufis, it will be better to peruse the obfuscation done by NCERT authors.

"A group ofreligious-minded people inmedievalIslam, known as Sufis, sought a deeper and more personal knowledge of God through asceticism (rahbaniya) and mysticism. The more society gave itself up to material pursuits and pleasures, the more the Sufis sought to renounce the world (zuhd) and rely on God alone (tawakkul). In the eighth and ninth centuries, ascetic inclinations were elevated to the higher stage of mysticism (tasawwuf) by the ideas of pantheism and love. Pantheism is the idea of oneness of God and His creation which implies that the human soul must be united with its Maker."

NCERT, class 11th, p 97

The positive adjective 'religious-minded people' pops up as soon as Sufis are to be mentioned, but is conspicuously missing when it is the turn of Brahmans. The famous European historian Richard Maxwell Eaton has enumerated the role played by Sufis.

"Early Muslim asceticism," writes Gibb, "was dominated by fear of Hell. Since death on Jihad was the only sure passport to paradise, it came about that in the early days ascetics had generally taken a prominent part in the froniter warfare." The term *jihad*, like *ribat*, also reflects this development. Earlysufis applied the term tothe inward and spiritual struggle against the temptations of this world as well as to the war against non-Muslims…

…For example in Anatolia some sufis, or " *ghazi-babas*," conferred a measure of religious legitimization on the acts of the fighting *ghazis* living with them on the frontier.

The ghazi and the ghazi-baba, the two ideal types of the Anatolian frontier, are also seen in the exploits of ghazi-led Turkoman tribes and a certain Sari Saltuk, a thirteenth century Sufiwhose heroic deeds were expounded ina fifteenth century hagiography, the Saltuk-nama. Here, Sari Saltuk is portrayed as exhorting the Turkomans ofAnatolia to take up war against the Christians, and his exhortations generally led to war and resulted in victory[40]."

To elevate the perceived qualities of Sufis, they are equated with Hindu 'Sants'.

"The sants had much in common with the sufis..." NCERT, class 7th, p 110

Notice again the subtle play of words. The term used is 'sants' and not Brahmans. In all the Indic traditions, a sant is someone who is above mundane feelings like hatred, bigotry, fanaticism or bias. The Sufis do not share these qualities as has been noted byAzizAhmed.

"Aziz Ahmed has asserted that Indian Sufis generally had to accommodate themselves with Islamic orthodoxy "because of the challenge and the risk of disintegration into Hindu mysticism."…In his Sukh Anjan Abu'l – Hasan Qadiri expressed the need of clinging to Islamic orthodoxy in order to avoid slipping into Hindu religious beliefs and practices:

You should read as quickly as possible, Oh Muslim, and you must be a believer. If not, the Devil will drop the sacred thread around your neck in a minute, And drag you with him wherever he goes until he makes you as he is. Fixing their attention mainly on the orthodoxyof the court, reformist sufis regarded Bijapur's non-Muslim population with attitudes ranging from indifference to hostility. Towards Brahmins, Hindu ascetics, and yogis, their attitude was often hostile…Toward the masses of non-elite Kannadiga and Maharashtrian non-Muslims, on the other hand, the reformist sufis seem to have been, at best, indifferent. Hindu commoners, seldom even mentioned in the sources, were

[40] (Sufis of Bijapur, pp. 35-36)

evidently dismissed as infidels destined beyond hope to damnation[41]."

It indicates that the influence of Hindu eclectism was felt as a threat tothe Muslim orthodoxy.Yet, these veryfanatics are portrayed as open-minded and eclectic in outlook.

"An alternative vision of God and the universe was developed by Islamic philosophers and scientists under the influence of Greek philosophy and science."

NCERT, class 11th, p 97

Virtue words like 'Philosophers' and 'Scientists' find association with Islamic theologians, but never with Brahmans. At the same time, the benign influence is also from Eurocentric worldview but never from Indian sources. By play of words, students are being fooled to believe that Islam entered the southern parts of India through poetry.

"A different genre of sufi poetrywas composed in and around the town of Bijapur, Karnataka…It is through this medium that Islam gradually gained a place in the villages of Deccan."

NCERT, class 12th, p 158

Here again, notice that while the influence of Brahmans is attributed to 'land grants', but in case of sufis, the hegemony is depicted as 'gained a place'by poetry. This is contrary to historical facts as the following passages will show.

The thirteenth and fourteenth centuries were a time of great upheaval in India. Islamized Turks were making raids and inroads into the south. Enterprising Sufis considered India as Dar al-harab, the land where Jihad has to be waged in order to plant Islam. It was in accordance with Islamic theology, therefore the Sufis usuallyemerge

[41] (ibid. pp. 132-133)

waging jihad; slaying countless infidels against overwhelming odds; and more often than not, being themselves slain and martyred in the process[42]. Becoming a 'Shaheed' is a sure gateway to Islamic heaven.As a result, we find many Jihadi Sufis surface in the south. Two most prominent ones are Pir Khandayat and Shaikh Ali Pahalwan. Eaton describes:—

"Pir Ma'bari Khandayat…It is said that in the time that arrogant infidels, surly Hindus and powerful and vain rajas ruled BIjapur byforce, he came here and waged jihad against the rajas and rebels. And with his iron bar he broke the heads and necks of many rajas and drove them to the dust of defeat. Many idolators who by the will of God had guidance and blessings, repented from their unbelief and error, and by the hand of Pir Ma'bari came to Islam. Nonetheless by the hands of wretched idolators and erring unbelievers, he and a group of his sons and friends drank the cup of martyrdom[43]."

"ShaikhAli Pahalwan, a companion ofSufiSarmast, migrated to a town near Kurnool where he and his followers became engaged in a struggle with Hindus, again described as a jihad, and were killed. Shaikh Shahid who was a disciple (khalifa) of Sufi Sarmast, is said to have migrated with four companions toTalikota, a town fiftymiles southeast ofBijapur. There, he and his companions engaged a number of Hindus in combat and, after killing "countless numbers" of them, were themselves slain. Still another early Sufi, Pir Jumna is said to have come to Bijapur city "in the time of flourishing unbelief," i.e., immediatelybefore the governorship of Karim al-din, and waged Jihad which "cleansed the area of idol worship." Another source adds that despite the Sufi's many

[42] (ibid. p. 19)

virtues, in the year 1304 Hindus persecuted and killed both him and his forty or fifty followers[44]."

The timing of the warrior Sufis' arrival and disappearance in the Deccan history provide further clues to the nature of their role. They began to arrive around the time of the first invasions from Delhi, and began to disappear around the time of the establishment of the Bahmani Kingdom. The fiftyyear period encompassed by these two events, from 1296 to 1347, thus saw the passing of the Bijapur plateau from Dar al-Harb to Dar al-Islam. This suggests that these sufis were not able to exist entirelyindependent of some kind of Muslim military presence in the Deccan. It also suggests that their existence was not necessary after Islam had achieved full political expression in a region that earlier had been a Muslim frontier. The warrior sufi, thus, appears as the most typical kind of sufi during the intervening half century when this part of the Deccan was subjected to repeated raids by Islamic armies from the north and was experiencing the social turmoil that accompanied the transition fromYadava toMuslim rule[45].

The record of Christianity

World history bears witness to the atrocities that were perpetrated by Christian clergyin the name of religion.Yet, like Ulama, theyare also portrayed in benign colours.As soon as Islam started spreading towards the west, it came in direct confrontation with the Christian world. Both the creeds were involved in a mortal struggle. However, the NCERT authors do not find it fit to let our children know these facts. The subtlety with which facts are altered can be seen from the following passage:—

[44] (ibid. pp. 31-32)

"There was also a change in the social and economic organization of western Europe in the eleventh centurywhich contributed to the hostility between Christendom and the Islamic world. The clergy and the warrior class (the first two orders – see Theme) were making efforts to ensure political stability as well as economic growth based on agriculture and trade. The possibilities of military confrontation between competing feudal principalities and a return to economic organization based on plunder were contained by the Peace of God movement. All military violence was forbidden inside certain areas, near places of worship, during certain periods considered sacred in the Church's calendar, and against certain vulnerable social groups, such as churchmen and the common people. The Peace of God deflected the aggressive tendencies of feudal society away from the Christian world and towards the 'enemies' of God. It built a climate in which fighting against the infidels (non-believers) became not only permissible but also commendable."

NCERT, class 11th, p 88

Firstly, the motive for hostilityhas been shifted from religious bigotry and intolerance to socio-economic factors. Secondly, while Brahmans and Kshatriyas are painted in darkest of colours, when it comes to Christianity, 'clergy and warrior class'are endeavouring stability, economic growth and 'promoting agriculture and trade'. Thirdly, churchmen are portrayed as 'vulnerable social group'. Fourthly, and more importantly, it is in the eleventh century that 'fighting infidels became commendable'. The depravity of such passages hides the fact that fighting infidels is a cornerstone of both ideologies, Christianity as well as Islam. This hostility is derived from their respective holy books, Bible and Qur'an, irrespective of any socioeconomic factors.

Although every imaginable vile and despotism is heaped on the ancient Indian society, institutions and norms of India, all aspects of alien religions are praised to the skies without any factual basis.All references to foreign institutions are generouslysprinkled with virtue words like 'devout', 'deeplyreligious', 'well-known', 'development of arts', 'gifted musicians', 'singing prayers', 'living on charity', 'study and manual labour'. Before we present the true picture, we re-produce the NCERT version.

"Apart from the Church, devout Christians had another kind of organisation. Some deeply religious people chose to live isolated lives, in contrast to clerics who lived amongst people in towns and villages. They lived in religious communities called abbeys or monasteries, often in places very far from human habitation. Two of the more well-known monasteries were those established by St Benedict in Italy in 529 and of Cluny in Burgundyin 910.

Monks took vows to remain in the abbey for the rest of their lives and to spend their time in prayer, study and manual labour, like farming. Unlike priesthood, this life was open to both men and women – men became monks and women nuns. Except in a few cases, all abbeys were single-sex communities, that is, there were separate abbeys for men and women. Like priests, monks and nuns did not marry.

From smallcommunities of10 or 20 men/women, monasteries grew to communities often of several hundred, with large buildings and landed estates, withattached schools or colleges and hospitals. They contributed to the development of the arts. Abbess Hildegard (see p.135) was a gifted musician, and did much to develop the practice of community singing of prayers in church. From the thirteenth century, some groups of monks – called friars – chose not to be based in a monastery but to move from place to place, preaching to the people and living on charity."

NCERT, class 11th, p 138

As everything else regarding NCERT texts, this is also contrary to the historical facts. In the artificial and unnaturalenvirons of monastic institutions, young women were duped to become nuns. Since monasticism is against the natural order of human instincts, these hapless women suffered all kind of vices in these institutions. A former Minister of Church of England, Antonio Gavin, described the repugnant state of these institutions and the personnel involved there. We quote him to describe the actual state of monasteries and abbeys as witnessed by him in the late seventeenth and the early eighteenth century.

"Many gentlemen send their daughters to the nunnery when they are some five, some six, some eight years old, under the care of some nun of their relations, or else some old nun of their acquaintance; and there they get education till they are fifteen years old. The tutoress takes a great deal of care not to let them go to the grate, nor converse with men all the while to prevent in them the knowledge and love of the world. They are caressed by all the nuns, and thinking it will be always so, theyare well pleased with their confinement. They have only liberty to go to the grate to their parents or relations, and always accompanied with the old mother tutoress.And when they are fifteen years old, which is the age fixed by the constitutions of all the orders, they receive the habit of a nun, and begin the year of noviciate, which is the year of trial, to see whether they can go through all the hardships, fastings, disciplines, prayers,' hours of divine service, obedience, poverty, chastity and penances practised in the monastery: but the prioress or abbess, and the rest of the professed nuns, do dispense with, and excuse the novices from all the severities, for fear that they should be dissatisfied with, and leave the convent: and in this they are very much in the wrong, for, besides that theydo not observe the precepts of their monastical rule, they deceive the poor, ignorant, inexperienced young novices, who, after their profession and vows of perpetuity, do heartily repent they had been so much indulged. Thus the novices, flattered in the year of noviciate, and thinking they will be so all their life time, when the year is expired, make profession and swear to observe chastity, obedience and poverty, during their lives, and clausura i.e. confinement; obliging themselves by it, never to go out of the monastery. After the profession is made, they begin to feel the severity and hardships of the monastical life…After this they have liberty to go to the grate, and talk with gentlemen, priests, and friars, who only go there as a gallant goes to see his mistress. So when the young nuns begin to have a notion of the pleasures of the worlds and how they have been deceived, they are heartily sorry, but too late, for there is no remedy. And minding nothing but to satisfy their passions as well as they can, they abandon themselves to all sorts of wickedness, and amorous intrigues[46]."

The code of ethics, devised by Brahmans, was of the highest order in which they were to live a life based on the principles ofAhimsa andAparigrah. Yet theyare described as wicked and discriminatory in NCERT textbooks. But the same authors, ignoring historical facts,

[46] (A Masterkey to Popery, pp. 60-61)

go out of their way to suggest that Christian monks and their institutions were houses of virtue.
"In Benedictine monasteries, there was a manuscript with
73 chapters of rules which were followed bymonks for many
centuries. Here are some of the rules they had to follow:

Chapter 6: Permission to speak should rarely be granted to monks.

Chapter 7: Humility means obedience.
Chapter 33: No monk should own private property.

Chapter 47: Idleness is the enemy of the soul, so friars and sisters should be occupied at certain times in manual labour, and at fixed hours in sacred reading."

NCERT, class 11th, p 139

Again notice the contrasting portrayal with respect to that of Brahmans. The land grants given by various kings to Brahmans were not personal property of any person, but the NCERT authors deliberately created perception of Brahamns being greedy by using terms like 'elites', 'lords' and 'landlords'. Onthe other hand, Christian clergy is being depicted as though they led an austere life without any lust for property. At the same time, Christian institutions are being projected as heavenly places. Sexual perversion of varying types had become the norm in these institutions as is evident from numerous recorded instances. For instance, Father Gavin tells in vivid detail that nuns used to smuggle friars into their chambers and even resorted to murder the persons whom they felt could expose their acts. The friars remained hidden and used to debauch nuns. The confession of one such nun is being reproduced to explain the difference between the reality and the perception being created by NCERT authors.
"One of the assembly contrived to mat all the floor of her chamber, and sent for the mat-maker to take the measure of the length and breadth of the room, and to make it in one piece, and send it to the sexton's chamber, who is a poor ignorant fellow. When the mat was there, and the man paid for it, one day in the evening we sent the sexton on several messages, and kept the key of his room. The fryar had asked leave of his prior to go into the country for a months time, and disguising himself in a layman's habit, feeing well two porters, came, in the dusk of the evening, into the sexton's room, and rolling himself up in the mat, the porters brought the mat to the door, where we were waiting for it; and taking it, we carried it up to one of our chambers. We were afraid that the porters would discover the thing, but by money we have secured ourselves from them; for *we hired ruffians to make away with them*. We put him out of the convent in a great chest which could be opened on the inside, and of which he had the key, and giving the chest to the sexton, he, and the servant of the convent carried it into the sexton's room. We ordered him to leave the key at the door, for we expected some relations, who were to take a collation there; and we sent him on some errand till the fryar had got out of the chest and out of danger. A month after, three of our friends began to perceive the condition they were in, and left the convent in one night, by which they have given great scandal to the city, and we do not know what is become of them; as for me, I design todo the same, for I am under the same apprehensions and fear; for I consider, that if I do continue in the convent, my big belly will discover me...[47]"

[47] (ibid. pp. 66-67)

Positive sounding adjectives are generouslyused to assiduouslybuild an image of theologians.
"Saint Augustine was bishop of the North African city of
Hippofrom 396 and a towering figure in the intellectualhistory
of the Church. Bishops were the most important religious
figures in the Christian community and often verypowerful." NCERT, class 11th, p 64

The adjective 'towering figure' is not used for a single Brahman, even Chanakya is not given this title.
"Chandragupta was supported by a wise man named Chanakya or Kautilya."
NCERT, class 6th, p 75

The distortions in NCERT books get amplified when one comes to know the true nature of the theologians being praised to the skies by these authors. On reading the views of StAugustine one gets an impression that he was highly influenced by Biblical myths. He took the Adam and Eve myth to be a fact and consequently had peculiar ideas regarding women.

"When the human race, in the exercise of this freedom of will, increased and advanced, there arose a mixture and confusion of the two cities bytheir participation in a common iniquity. And this calamity, as well as the first, was occasioned by woman, though not in the same way; for these women were not themselves betrayed, neither did they persuade the men to sin, but having belonged to the earthly city and society of the earthly, they had been of corrupt manners from the first, and were loved for their bodily beauty by the sons of God, or the citizens of the other city which sojourns in this world[48]."
So, according to this 'towering figure', women were the cause of calamity as it was Eve who had been deceived by the serpent and the ills of the mundane society are also to be attributed to woman as she has 'corrupt manners from the first'.

It is not only StAugustine who is glorified.Another bishop is raised on a high pedestal by the largesse of our eminent authors. "In the later fourthcenturyit was possible for powerfulbishops
like Ambrose to confront equally powerful emperors when
they were excessively harsh or repressive in their handling
of the civilian population."
NCERT, class 11th, p 71

Let us take a peek into the mind of this bishop, who seems to be endowed with a golden heart.
"Hence arise these incentives to vice, that women, in
their fear that they may not prove attractive to men, paint
their faces with carefully-chosen colors, and then from stains
on their features go on to stains on their chastity. What folly
it is to change the features of nature into those of painting,
and from fear of incurring their husband's disapproval, to
proclaim openly that they have incurred their own! For
the woman who desires to alter her natural appearance
pronounces condemnation on herself; and her eager
endeavors to please another prove that she has first been
displeasing to herself. And what testimony to thine ugliness
can we find, O woman, that is more unquestionable than
thine own, when thou art afraid to show thyself? If
thou art comely why dost thou hide thy comeliness? If thou
art plain, whydost thou lyingly pretend to be beautiful, when

thou canst not enjoy the pleasure of the lie either in thine
own consciousness or in that of another? For he loves another woman, thou desirest to please another man; and thou art angry if he love another, though he is taught adultery in thee. Thou art the evil promptress of thine own injury. For even the woman who has been the victim of a pander shrinks from acting the pander's part, and though she be vile, it is herself she sins against and not another. The crime of adultery is almost more tolerable than thine; for adultery tampers with modesty, but thou with nature.[49]"

The barbaric manner in which the tolerant polytheists and their traditions were decimated by Christian bishops and other members of clergy is just glossed over.

"Polytheism did not disappear overnight, especially in the western provinces, where the Christian bishops waged a running battle against beliefs and practices they condemned more than the Christian laity did."

NCERT, class 11th, p 73

The widespread abuse of the power by bishops during medieval ages is one of the reasons this period is considered as DarkAge in Europe. Popes, the highest authority of early Christendom, were the fountainhead of these maladies. Contrary to the apologetics of NCERT, the actual historical documents throw light on the misdeeds of Christian theologians.

"The Bishops of Rome had accustomed themselves so much to intimidate their victims—the women whom they had corrupted, both married and single— either byblandishments or by threats (and where this was not the case, by gratifying their lustful appetites), as to cause them to will to them or transfer to them their property, and to such an extent, that theyactuallyruined several families; whereupon the Emperor Valentinianus, to stop this abuse, made a law, and his successors (Valeus, Gratianus, and others) confirmed it— That the Ecclesiastics, and those who undertake to be continent or profess celibacy, should abstain from going to visit the widows and unmarried women, that they might not receive anything belonging to them, either privately or by the pretext of having joined them in a religious association, or by anyliberal gift, &c…This good law was read in the churches of Rome, and though it is stringent enough, as it confiscated everything that the Ecclesiastics received from the women, by testament, or donation while living, or by escroquery, yet the high clergy found means of evading it, and continued to plunder the women, who liked to be victimized, in exchange, or in satisfaction of some other commodities called amatorial transactions[50]."

Science and philosophy

Similarly, the acts of Islamic iconoclasm and its debilitating impact on the scientific temperament of the world are sanitised. When the IslamisedArab marauders fanned out ofArabia to convert the entire planet into Dar-ul-Islam, they started destroying civilizations that had been thriving for centuries. Regarding the predominant spirit of these marauders, historian KS Lal has aptly stated:—

"The sanguine psychology produced by Jihad is evident in the behavior of some of the greatest names in Indian Muslim history. Muhammad bin Sakifi had been sent to invade Sindh by al-Hajjaj. Hajjaj had earlier been appointed Governor of Mecca by Caliph Abdul Malik in 73 H (692 CE) where he built the holy Kaba. It was a pious performance; his other great achievement was, as he claimed, that he had killed

[50] (Papal Criminal History, pp. 167-168)

100,000 men with his own sword. The ambition and boast of killing one lakh or a hundred thousand human beings was shared by manyMuslim Caliphs, invaders and rulers. Khalid bin Walid was known as "the Sword ofAllah," AbulAbbas, the first Caliph of the Abbasid line was renowned as "The blood pourer" and Alauddin Husain was called "jahan soz (world burner)". He carried fire and sword through the kingdom of Ghazni (1151 CE). Such titles had a pride of place in the history of Islam[51]."

With the dual objectives of absolving these marauders of their crimes and to cultivate their image as 'progressive and intellectual' beings, the NCERT authors hide their gorydeeds and highlight their meagre benign actions. All these lies become all the more glaring when put in the context of the NCERT authors' vilification of Brahmans without any basis in historical facts.

Indic science and technology is acknowledged as pioneering and source of many modern scientific theories and technological inventions. But, the NCERT authors deliberately undermine the sterling role the Indic culture, and more specifically the Brahmans, played in this. Intellectual honesty demands that the pioneers of any science should be given the credit for their achievements. But the peculiar mentality of our NCERT authors gives more credit to compilers and translators, all the while reviling the pioneers.

"Science and Philosophy: TheArabs'Contribution Much of the writings of the Greeks and Romans had been familiar to monks and clergymen through the 'Middle Ages', but they had not made these widely known. In the fourteenth century, many scholars began to read translated works of Greek writers like Plato and Aristotle. For this they were indebted

[51] (Legacy of Muslim rule in India. p.27)

not to their own scholars but to Arab translators who had carefully preserved and translated ancient manuscripts (Plato was Aflatun, and Aristotle Aristu in Arabic). While some European scholars read Greek in Arabic translation, the Greeks translated works ofArabic and Persian scholars for further transmission to other Europeans. These were works on natural science, mathematics, astronomy, medicine and chemistry. Ptolemy'sAlmagest (a work on astronomy, written in Greek before 140 CE and later translated into Arabic) carries the Arabic definite article 'al', which brings out the Arabic connection. Among the Muslim writers who were regarded as men of wisdom in the Italian world were Ibn Sina*('Avicenna'in Latin, 980-1037), anArab physician and philosopher of Bukhara in Central Asia, and al-Razi ('Rhazes'), author of a medical encyclopaedia. Ibn Rushd ('Averroes'in Latin, 1126-98), anArab philosopher of Spain, tried to resolve the tension between philosophical knowledge (faylasuf) and religious beliefs. His method was adopted by Christian thinkers."

NCERT, class 11th, p 157

Firstly, notice that the dead civilizations; Greek, Roman and Persian are being presented in a positive light but there is not a single word about India. Secondly, mere translation of ancient books is being pronounced as contribution toscience and philosophy. Thirdly, notice that there are 'Muslim men of wisdom' and 'Christian thinkers' but there is no such positive word for Hindus or Brahmans. It becomes more ironical when one learns that, in fact, the credit for all such sciences belongs more to India. The British astronomer of the eighteenth century, John Playfair, subjected the astronomical literature of different regions to verydetailed tests. After establishing the antiquity of astronomy of

Brahmans, he states that if there was a communication between ancient Greece and India, then the flow of knowledge was from India to Greece[52].

Scientific analyses establish that Indian astronomy is not derived from the concept of Ptolemy and neither is the astronomy of the Indian derived from that of the Greeks, the Arabians, the Persians or the Tartars[53].

In fact, Playfair demonstrated that the astronomy of Hindus was far advanced as compared to that of Ptolemy.

"That motion by which the fixed stars all appear to move east ward, and continually to increase their distance from the place, that the sunoccupies at the vernal equinox, is known to the Brahmins, and enters into the composition of all their tables. They compute this motion to be at the rate of 54" a year; so that their annus magnus, or the time in which the fixed stars complete an entire revolution, is 24,000 years. This motion is too quick by somewhat less than 4" a year; an error that will not be thought great, when it is considered, that Ptolemy committed one of 14", in determining the same quantity[54]…Though this supposition is not accurate, as the apogee gains upon the stars about 10" annually, it is much nearer the truth than the system of Ptolemy, where the sun' s apogee is supposed absolutely at rest, so as continually to fall back among the fixed stars, by the whole quantity of the precession of the equinoxes[55]."

He categorically talked about Ptolemy's almagest:

[52] (Indian Science And Technology In The Eighteenth Century, p. 86)
[53] (ibid pp. 64-65)
[54] (ibid p. 53)

"For what further relates to the parts of the astronomy of Chaldea and of Greece, which may be supposed borrowed from that of India, I must refer to the 10th Chap. of the *Astronomie Indienne*, where that subject is treated with great learning and ingenuity. After all the silence of the ancients with respect of Indian astronomy, is not easily accounted for. The first mention that is made of it, is by the Arabian writers; and M. Baille quotes a very singular passage, where Massoudi, and author of the 12th century, says, that Brama composed a book entitled, Sind-Hind, that is, Of theAge of Ages, from which was composed the book Maghisti, and from thence the Almagest of Ptolemy. (Ast. Ind. Disc. rel.p.175.)[56]"

TheArabic, Persian and Turkish marauders were more forthcoming in acknowledging the intellectual credit where it was due. TheArabs did not have advanced knowledge of mathematics and, ipso facto, of sciences. Their contact with India enriched them with Indian mathematics which was highly advanced. As a token of gratitude or a mark of intellectual honesty, they call their numeral system as 'Rakam-ul-Hind'or number system from Hind. That is why, although Arabic is written from 'right to left', the number system they follow is written from 'left to right'. Even the numbering of verses in Qur'an are written according to Indian number system.

Though above analysis of John Playfair leaves some scope for speculation, it is Colebrooke who cites the clinching evidence about not only astronomy but even algebra being a gift of Hindus to the Arabs.

The age when Brahmegupta flourished, seems then, from the concurrence of all these arguments, to be satisfactorily settled as antecedent to earliest dawn of the culture of sciences among theArabs; and consequently establishes the fact, that the Hindus were in possession ofAlgebra before it was known to Arabians[57].

Despite such categorical findings, Indian civilization is being deliberately run down and the credit is being transferred to foreigners.

Any mathematician or scientist will vouch that this number system has revolutionized all aspects of scientific progress. The game changer is the concept of zero which eases calculations and enables to express mind-bogglingly large numbers with ease. Instead of highlighting and explainingtheramifications ofthis unique contribution to mankind, it has been reduced to a mere footnote:

While numerals had been used earlier, mathematicians inIndia now invented a special symbol for zero. This system of counting was adapted by the Arabs and then spread to Europe.

It continues to be in use throughout the world. The Romans used a system of counting without using zero. Try and find out more about it.

NCERT, class 6th, p 131

A revolutionizing concept has been reduced to 'invented a special symbol'. The last line about Romans does the trick. It simply robs the uniqueness of Indian number system.

NCERT has adopted an insidiously slanted and contrived way of teaching. According to them, all the ills, real or imaginary, were a handiwork of Brahmans. At the same time, their sterling

5 7 (Brahmagupta, 1871 p. vii)
contributions to all the fields are filtered out. The filtering mechanism has many filters:

1. The first filter omits the contributions in entirety. For example, there is not even a passing reference of the six schools of thought called 'Shad-darshan'. They have been obliterated.

2. The second filter presents the contributions in such a manner that they do not look like major contributions, as is the above case of zero and .

3. The third filter simply cleaves the word 'Brahman' from the contribution. This trick has been used for Chanakya who is described as a 'wise man'.

This systematic and sophisticated hatred for Brahmans has an uncanny resemblance to the campaigns which were carried out by Nazis to vilify Jews.

The Way Forward

A

n important choice is to be made by us as a society and as a nation: to continue to allow history to be a captive of a narrow and divisive ideology, or have it based solely on facts – a history that does justice to country's rich heritage and culture.

So far, our successive governments, deciding on our behalf, have opted for and allowed ideology of the ruling dispensation and its kowtowing historians to drive the historical narrative of the country. These politically-driven ideologies run counter, not only to the interests of the nation and its citizens, but also to historical facts. The veneer of objectivity easily cracks when confronted with facts. The slants and the lies are too obvious for an objective reader, as preceding pages prove.

Isn't it time we purge this deception and make a choice for merit and fact-based history? Don't the children of this country deserve a truthful history rather than a bunch of lies and biases wrapped up in their school textbooks?

Is it impossible to replace an agenda driven history with a history based solely on facts? Will it take herculean efforts to bring back objectivity to the NCERT history textbooks?Absolutely not! In this book only facts were used to confront the conjectures and opinions of the NCERT historians. Original historical texts were the basis for exposing the NCERT lies.All that is needed is the right intention, political will and honesty in approach.

Apologists In Denial

The question that arises is why so many lies and conjectures have been employed in the textbooks instead of simply presenting the widely and easily available historical facts?

For starters, the lies are employed to cover up the most brutal period of Indian history. The 'medieval'or the so-called 'Muslim period' was a time when indigenous culture, religion and economy were almost decimated by the invaders from Central Asia and MiddleEast. The denial is to wipe out all the traces of this brutal period. This denial of history also makes the children oblivious of their ancestors' heroic and relentless struggle against the invaders. These invaders, from CentralAsian and Middle-Eastern regions, were all adherents of Islam.

The deniers of true history either completely deny the oppression or claim that it was rooted in invaders'greed only. But, as this book has shown there are innumerable instances of rulers and brigands committing genocide against non-Muslims. Similarly, the sexual enslavement ofnon-Muslim womenat the hands of Muslim invaders is very well documented. It is a historical fact that there were many sex-slave markets or *mandis* located around the country, where captured non-Muslim women were bought and sold, as currently being done with Yazidi women in Syria and Iraq. Forced mass conversions to Islam were also commonplace wherever Muslim rulers could establish any semblance of authority.

But, it seems denying the truth of this period isn't enough of a crime. Instead, the NCERT historians go to the other extreme and glorify this period. The most oppressive regimes are showcased as the epitome of justice and efficient administration. Isn't it time we rectify this morally corrupt and horrendous injustice done not only to the children who are studying their ancestors'history, but also to the nation's history itself?

Would it be right for us to deny the truth of the genocide of the Yazidi and other minorities in the

Middle-East? Wouldn't it be extreme moral bankruptcy and inhumanity to deny the Jewish holocaust? How disgusting it would be to whitewash the holocaust and then write a historysinging paeans to the German administrative efficiency during the time period when the gas chambers were still operational? This is exactly what is happening in India. In the past few decades, a code has been dictated. According to this code, anyone who denies genocides against non-Muslims is instantly granted a badge. A badge that declares the denier as an epitome of secularism. On the other hand, any attempt to rectify the historical wrong is labelled as communal. Should the Germans or the international community at large label Jews as 'communal' for remembering what happened to their ancestors?

Immediately after the World War II, Germany, as a nation, faced a dilemma. One group of academicians was in favour of writing a history in which there would be no mention of crimes against Jews during the war. The reason for this negationism or denial was their desire to hide the ugly face of perpetrators of the holocaust. On the other hand were those who felt that historical facts should be presented truthfully. In the end, denial was outlawed categorically. The sections of the statute concerned are:

(3) Whosoever publicly or in a meeting approves of, denies or downplays an act committed under the rule of National Socialism of the kind indicated in section 6 (1) of the Code of International Criminal Law, in a manner capable of disturbing the public peace shall be liable to imprisonment not exceeding five years or a fine.

(4) Whosoever publicly or in a meeting disturbs the public peace in a manner that violates the dignity of the victims by approving of, glorifying, or justifying National Socialist rule of arbitrary force shall be liable to imprisonment not exceeding three years or a fine.

Without making any direct comparisons, it can be stated that the atrocities perpetrated on the people of India in the name of religion during the medieval period were very gruesome and widespread. Yet, these stand wiped out from the collective memoryof the nation, or at least, from the mainstream narrative.

Aren't the Germans perfectly right in making it a criminal offense to deny the Jewish holocaust? Children in Germany and Israel are taught about the Jewish holocaust, and it is done not to seed hatred for one another. It is being taught as a wise reminder about the sorrowful past; to learn lessons so as not to repeat such dreadful acts of history. In fact, there are several holocaust memorials both in Europe and in Israel commemorating the victims. But, in India one can't even talk about the historical travesties that Indian population went through without being derided as a misanthrope and a hate-monger. This must change. Truth has to prevail. The children of this country must be allowed to know about what happened to their ancestors, and learn from the longest and most gruesome struggle in human history.

Composite Hatred

The irony is while the NCERT historians cover up the genocidal crimes of the medieval Islamic rulers, they manufacture crimes of the Indians, particularly the 'upper castes' and more specifically the Brahmans. There is a need to revisit the 'ancient' period where such"Brahmanical" crimes allegedlytook place. Entire communities are stereotyped and stigmatized because of the NCERT's historical narrative. In our exhaustive research, it was hard to find any scriptural, historical or specific instances where such allegations can be justified.

For the deniers and apologists, the much-touted reason for whitewashing of the medieval religious bigotry from the history textbooks is maintenance of 'peaceful relations between different

communities', and 'safeguarding the composite culture of the country'. But, strangely, these same apologists and deniers show no restraint when planting seeds of animosity and mutual suspicion in a student's mind on the basis of caste, region and language. Why does the concern for 'composite culture' suddenly vanish when the rich socio-cultural-linguistic plurality of the country is maliciously presented as mutually antagonistic differences? When the NCERT targets the 'upper castes', and that too without any supporting facts, it only follows the colonial aim of a divisive education.

Between Paranoia And Jingoism

There is no place for jingoism in historical texts, but that doesn't mean that genuine national achievements in science, literature, language, ethics and other different spheres of culture have to be either underplayed or purged from the history textbooks. India need not be afraid of nationalism. Perhaps middle path is the wayforward
– between paranoia and jingoism.Amiddle path that is not apologetic of its rich heritage and can take historical facts in its stride.

Referenced Truth

Another important question that begs an answer is: how easily these lies could be peddled as "scientific" rendering of Indian history? The answer lies in the simplicity of the technique used. The trick is
– write whatever the political masters desire, build any narrative that suits the propagandist's objective, and never ever give the source or references for your contentions. Not a single NCERT history textbook mentions the sources or references used by the authors. Explicit documentationmust be compulsoryfor all historytextbooks. The reader has the right to know as well as check for himself the basis on which history is being written.

The Prism Of Religion

The prism of religion through which the NCERT visualizes and then manufactures Indian historical narrative must be carefully scrutinized. In a countrywhere secularism forms the basic character of the Constitution and is even included in its Preamble, it is high treason to communalize the historical narrative, but this is exactly what the NCERT has done with aplomb and audacity. We would like to stay away from labelling the authors of NCERT textbooks as anti-national or anti-India. We would also advise other like-minded people to desist from such name calling. The question though remains, why and how a coterie of historians has succeeded in hijacking the national historical narrative? Their biases against India and its indigenous culture are obvious.Are these biases enough to justify the falsification of history? Is there more to the treachery these historians are indulging in against the nation? Some public voices do contend that religious conversions of followers of Indic religions toAbrahamic creeds, and the balkanization of the nation is at the root of such blatant propaganda in history writing. But, it is beyond the scope of this book to conclude as to what motivates the authors of NCERT textbooks to indulge in such lies.

In Denial, with Malicious Intent

W

e, the authors of this book, had approached the Punjab and Haryana High Court through a civil writ petition No. 24491 in 2015 regarding distortions in NCERT textbooks. Our prayer to the honorable court was that it should *give directions to the NCERT for making corrections in the textbooks*. The writ

petition was preceded by multiple RTI applications and representations sent to NCERT and the Ministry of Human Resource Development between 2011 and 2015.

Hearing the petition, the high court had ordered, "The petitioners have filed this petition seeking direction to the National Council of Education Research & Training (NCERT) (respondent No. 3 herein) to make corrections in the history textbooks, restore deliberate omissions of important history related to India, and delete biased opinions...we dispose of this petition with liberty to the petitioners to submit detailed and comprehensive representation in this regard to NCERT – respondent No. 3. If any such representation is submitted by the petitioners within a period of two months from today, NCERT – respondent No. 3 – is directed to consider and decide the same in accordance with law, expeditiously."

In pursuance of the order, the authors, through National Centre for Historical Research and Comparative Studies, an independent research organization based in Chandigarh, in 2015, submitted a representation to the NCERT, pin-pointing 182 specific anomalies, biases, unsubstantiated statements/ assertions and errors in the history textbooks of classes VI, VII, VIII and XII, which need to be rectified.
It took the NCERT more than a year to formulate the reply to our representation, which we received in January 2017. Unfortunately, the NCERT response follows the same pattern and strategies that it has employed in the textbooks.

By this time the book was already in print, therefore, our rejoinder to this response is being appended to this book as a supplement. A full response will be out in due course of time. We felt it prudent to share withour readers, a few illustrative examples that willbe helpful in highlighting the extent of the malady that afflicts our institutions.

Case – 1

One of the objections that we had raised in the petition has been explained in the book (page 101). We have filed an application under RTI Act (Annexure I) asking for the relevant facts. The reply of NCERT is attached as Annexure II.

Objectionable assertion in NCERT books
'Battles were also fought for land', and then it states that: 'Some battles were fought for water, and to capture people'. p. 46, class 6th Our Objections

Not based on facts. No hymns in the Vedas mention such activities. The ethics of war for Kshatriyas forbid attacking noncombatants, a fact attested byforeign travelers likeArian and Megasthenes. On the contrary, the Islamic books like Quran and Hadis explicitlyexhort to capture land and people of other faiths. Similarly, Bible exhorts its followers to kill and enslave people.

The responses from NCERT is reproduced below (italicized), followed by our evaluation of these responses.
NCERT's response 3(a):
• *The book does not raise the issue of combatants and non-combatants as suggested by the petitioners*.
Evaluation of NCERT's response:

It is a typical red-herring. The issue is definitely NOT of combatants or non-combatants. It is about the statement of capturing and enslaving people. It is about the perception of India's past that is being

created by the play of words.

NCERT's response 3(b):

• *The accounts of Megasthenes, and of the Islamic and Christian texts are irrelevant in the matter, as they pertain to different periods and contexts*.

Evaluation of NCERT's response:

Deciding the contents of the country's history books is a difficult task. Especially when equitable treatment has to be given to different regions and time periods. No matter how diligently the contents are planned, there will always be some disgruntled voices pointing fingers at the omissions and commissions. But, this cannot be an excuse to propagate a faulty version of history. If NCERT is quoting Indic scriptures for giving reasons for war during the Vedic period, then scriptures relevant to the medieval period should also be quoted by it. The portrayal of different religions and eras should be based on a uniform yardstick. If the subject matter of discussion is the reasons of war and the reasons for enslaving people, then the context is same for ancient, as well as, medieval period. Can these texts be "irrelevant" when the medieval invaders justify the mass murder, enslavement and rapine against the Indians byquoting their religious texts?

NCERT's response 3(c):

• *The following verse of Rgveda may be brought to the notice of the petitioners –*
To him, the lord of all, the lord of wealth, of light; him who is lord of ever, lord of men and tilth.

Him who is lord of horses, lord of kine, lord of floods, to Indra, to the holy bring sweet Soma juice.

The term translated for lord is the epithet 'jit', meaning conqueror. Thus, nrjit, urvarajit, apjit etc ***convey the sense*** *of conqueror of people, fertile land, water. In other words, acquiring resources through battle or warfare is* ***indicated*** *by this verse.*

The same hymn continues,
By sacrifice the yearning sages send forth their songs found furtherance from him who speeds the flood.
In Indra seeking help with worship and with hymns, they drew him to themselves and won their kine and wealth

This ***justifies*** *the statement made in the textbook*. Evaluation of NCERT's response:

First of all, by NCERT's own admission, they are resorting to 'justification' for their 'statement in the textbook'. It is an acceptance of the fact that no verse or hymn in Rgveda has a direct or explicit meaning as NCERT has proclaimed in the textbook.

Secondly, about their own admission regarding the epithet 'jit' being translated byGriffith as 'lord'. Should it not raise a doubt about the reliabilityofsuch translators? Especially, when one is entrusted withthe task of educating millions ofstudents. Now, Ralph Thomas Hotchkin Griffith was a colonialist and the son of a chaplain. This should not be used as an excuse to run him down. He could have been a sincere scholar despite belonging to a Christian family of the colonial era. But, it is the irony which is hard to miss. The NCERT authors have, in their reply, tried to run down our objections by this childish ruse. Theyhave used terms like "colonial interpretive models", "colonialmindset",

“colonialhistoriography”, “British accounts”, “colonialhistorians”, “colonialhistorians”, “colonial historiography”, “colonial epistemes”, “colonial and cultural prejudices”, “colonialepistemes”, “colonial administrative and constitutional formulations” and “colonial typologies”. In all these instances, these terms have been used in a pejorative sense, to run down the evidences provided by us in support of our objections. On the face of it, the NCERT officials have serious apprehensions about everything that is colonial. And yet, theyhave relied very heavilyon translation of Vedas by a “colonial Sanskritist” like Griffith.

For the third aspect, it is better to look at the hymn, as it is:**fo'oftrs /kfUtrs LoftZrs l=kftrs u`ftrs moZjkftrsA v'oftrs xksftrs vfCtrs HkjsUæk; lksea ;trk; g¸;ZrEk~AA**

The epithet ‘jit’ has been used eight times in this hymn. Let us look at the genuine translations of all these eight terms:

fo'oftrs & fo'ot;h – lord of the world
l=kftrs & lnkt;h] u ijkftr gksus okyk – undefeated **LoftZr & LoxZt;h** – lord of the heavens
u`ftrs – euq";t;h – lord of humanity
v'oftrs – v'ot;h – lord of horses
xksftrs – xkst;h – lord of cattle
moZjkftr – moZjk Hkwfet;h – lord of fertile lands **/kuftrs – /kUkt;h** – lord of wealth

vIlqftrs – tyt;h – lord of water
After all these epithets, it states that**ml banz dks lkse dh vkgqfr nks** i.e. we offer oblations to such a lord Indra. The very first one means ‘conqueror of the world’. To understand this one does not evenhave to be a Sanskrit scholar as even the most rudimentaryknowledge of Hindi is sufficient to understand this. Then why have the NCERT authors not stated that ‘some battles were fought to conqueror the world’? Similarly, **l=kftrs** means**lnkt;h** or one who is undefeated. What restricted the authors of the council to state that the warriors were invincible? In fact, these willful omissions vindicate our contention that the NCERT authors have deliberately created a narrative which robs the heritage of India of its grandeur. If *nrjit, urvarajit, apjit, etc. convey the sense of conqueror of people, fertile land, water. In other words, acquiring resources through battle or warfare is indicated by this verse* then the same verse should also convey ‘world conqueror’and ‘invincible’.

They have themselves conceded that the terms “convey the sense of conqueror”. Yet, they have not used the word ‘conqueror’in the textbooks. Choosing appropriate words in order to have desired effect on the target readership/audience is known as lexical technique. These techniques are also known as rhetorical devices and have been used effectively by propagandists. In this case, the word in original source (translation byGriffith) is “lord”, which could have been used as it is or could have been improved upon byusing conqueror instead of lord. Both these words have a positive connotation. Instead of using either of them, NCERT has used the phrase “capture people”, which creates a negative impression. The readers should remember that it is these very historians who have used epithets like “great lineages” for Ghenghis Khan and Timurlame, the invaders notorious for their attacks to not only capture people but also to kill and rape them.

Dr Ramakant Angiras, former head of the Sanskrit department, Panjab University, points to a more fundamental problem afflicting NCERT. The word ‘jit’ has an entirely different implication in Sanskritic traditions, when compared to Abrahamic traditions. Contrary to the linear history of Abrahamic creeds whose expansion is based on attacks and raids, the term ‘jit’ refers to very different forms of victory. For example, in Kathopanishad, a person named Vaajshvas, the father of Nachiketa,

is desirous of gaining the merit of performing 'Vishvajit'Yajna. In this pursuit, he donates all his wealth. The very definition of the 'Vishvajit'yajna is that in it, everything is donated. Therefore translating 'jit' as a victory based on superior military power is gross injustice to the Indic traditions. This should serve as a warning to all academicians. Awarning that the moment a Sanskrit term is translated into a language as alien as English, the term loses its literal and cultural meaning. This is a primary reason that even the commentaries on Sanskrit texts are also in Sanskrit. The commentary of Saayan is a case in point. Even Hindi, though derived from and closer to Sanskrit, fails to convey the original import of Sanskrit.

And what conclusion have the NCERT masters drawn – *Acquiring resources through battle or warfare is indicated by this verse*.

Let us also examine the hymn from which NCERT has *justified* the statement in the book.
baæ dh dkeuk djrs gq, euh"kh vFkkZr es/kkoh ¼vafxjk _f"k;ksa½ us viuh f/k;ksa ls Lrqfr djrs gq, tyksa ds çsjd baæ ls xÅavksa ¼cqf)eÙkk½ dk ekxZ ;K ¼ri½ ls çkIr fd;kA fQj j{kk dh bPNk djrs gq, baæ esa viuh Lrqfr;ksa dks fu;qä djrs gq, Lojksa ls Hkjs gq, vafxjk _f"k;ksa us ml baæ ds Lrks= ls mikluk djds æfo.kksa ¼xks/kuksa½ dks çkIr fd;kA

By no stretch of imagination can it mean that wars were fought to capture people or other resources.
Case – 2
Another objection that we had raised in the petition is also from the same page of NCERT.

Objectionable assertion in NCERT books:
Some of the wealth that was obtained was kept bythe leaders, some was given to the priests and the rest was distributed amongst the people. Some wealth was used for the performance of yajnas or sacrifices in which offerings were made into the fire. These were meant for gods and goddesses. Offerings could include ghee, grain, and in some cases, animals.

p. 46, class 6th

Our objections
There are no hymns or verses in the Vedic corpus which have this meaning, or which even suggest distribution of the "looted wealth". On the contrary, chapter 8 of Quran specifically encourages such distribution of looted wealth. According to Quranic injunctions, 20% of the loot from nonMuslims is to be kept by the looter and rest distributed amongst the members of the raiding gang.

The NCERT response to this point 4(a):
• *"As mentioned above, citing Quranic texts in this context is irrelevant."*

Evaluation of NCERT's response:
It is absolutely relevant because the NCERT authors are willfully maligning the Indic traditions by portraying them as robbers and dacoits. At the same time, they are deliberately trying to conceal the unpalatable aspects of alien creeds. We have dealt with the topic in 4th chapter of this bookunder the topic "Omitting theAbrahamic Slavery". If *inferences* can be taught as historical facts on the basis of *analogies* (read the following point for this), then why the unambiguous and clear injunctions ofAbrahamic creeds are being shielded? What are the reasons for this discrimination against the Indic culture?

NCERT's response 4(b)

• *"In the Rgveda, Agni is frequently compared to priest, while Indra is compared to the warrior/chief/Raja. These analogies provide the basis of inference about the practices prevalent at the time. We may cite just one example from the book VIII of the Rgveda to illustrate this:*

As cows low to their calves in stalls, so with our songs we glorify
this Indra, even your Wondrous God who checks attack, who joys in the delicious juice. Celestial, bounteous Giver, girt about with might, rich, mountain-like, in precious things, Him swift we seek. For foodful booty rich in kine, brought hundredfold and thousandfold. Indra, the strong and lofty hills are powerless to bar thy way.

None stay that act of thine when thou wouldst fain give wealth to one like me who sings thy praise A
Warrior thou by strength, wisdom, and wondrous deed, in might excellest all that is.
Hither may this our hymn attract thee to our help, the hymn which Gotamas have made.
For in thy might thou stretchest out beyond the boundaries of heaven.
The earthly region, Indra, comprehends thee not. After thy Godhead hast thou waxed?
When, Maghavan, thou honourest the worshipper, no one is there to stay thy wealth.
Most liberal Giver thou, do thou inspire our song of praise, that we may win the spoil.

The hymn indicates that Indra, who is regarded as a warrior will enable the invokers to win wealth in battle and give them a share in it."

Evaluation of NCERT's response:
Let us, for the sake of argument, accept this far-fetched conclusion that the above hymn is about invocation. Let us also accept that due to this invocation, the warriors will be able to share wealth won by them. Yet, how does it prove that it actually happened!
The NCERT wants us to believe that

• the hymn indicates that in this case Indra *is* a warrior
• that *this* warrior is being invoked
• that the invokers *really went* into battles after such invocations
• that they *won* these battles
• that *this* led to gaining of wealth by them
• that this wealth *was* distributed as share by them

Let us be naïve enough to admit all this. Yet, where does it indicate:
• that some of them were leaders
• that some of them were priests
• that some wealth was used to perform yajnas
• that offerings were made in fire
• that these were meant for gods
• that these were meant for goddesses
• that the offerings included ghee, grain
• and more importantly, that these offerings included animals

According to Dr Ramakant Angiras, this is a major discrepancy and raises serious questions about the intentions and intellect of NCERT authors. According to Dr Angiras, trying to treat Vedas as documents of linear history is a colonial fad which is in line with the Max-Meuller school of thought. This school of thought tries to project their JudeoBiblical sensibilities on eastern scriptures, whereas the two are highly incompatible. Such limited and highly erroneous views do not do justice to the

eastern worldview in general and Vedic in particular. As a result, such views are not accepted by traditional and authentic scholars of Sanskrit. **Case – 3**
The following is another objection that we had raised in the petition.

Objectionable assertion in NCERT books
'Sometimes, the people who composed the hymns described themselves as Aryas and called their opponents Dasas or Dasyus. These were people who did not perform sacrifices, and *probably* spoke different languages. Later the term dasa (and the feminine dasi) came to mean slave. Slaves were women and men who were often captured in war. They were treated as the property of their owners, who could make them do whatever work they wanted.'

p. 47, class 6th Our objections:

Firstly, the use of the term 'sometimes'is questionable. Is it necessary to mention oneself as Arya in every hymn and shlok? It is like saying that a shaayar sometimes called himself as 'Ghalib'. Secondly, the word Arya means noble, which can even be inferred from the Buddhist texts and terms like Chatvari Arya Sayani and Arya Ashtangik Marg. Thirdly, the opposition to Dasyus is not on the basis of their language or not performing 'sacrifices', but their misdeeds. As today, the criminals are from our society and not a distinct group or race, same is with Dasyus. Fourthly, Rigveda 6/22/10 talks of changing Dasyus intoAryas which is to indicate that it is not a racial conflict. There are no hymns or verses in the entire Vedic corpus that have the meaning as mentioned in NCERT text.

NCERT response 6 :
"The petitioners object to the fact that the authors of hymns sometimes described themselves as Aryas and referred to their opponents as Dasas or Dasyus."

Evaluation of NCERT's response:
In this case, the NCERT officials are trying to hide facts. They have conveniently ignored the rest of the objections which are far more damaging to the nation. Apart from the above single line, we have also objected to the following assertion.

"Slaves were women and men who were often captured in war. They were treated as the property of their owners, who could make them do whatever work they wanted."

Where are the references from the Vedas which support these allegations of NCERT?

NCERT response 6(a):
• *Given that the term Arya occurs 33 times in Rgveda, it is not inaccurate to suggest that this was one form of identification. The textbook does not deny the importance of Arya as a marker of the identity. Therefore the objection and analogy with Shaayar seems misplaced and unnecessary.*

Evaluation of NCERT's response:
If it is one form of identification, then why has it not been explained to the students and what are the other forms of identification?When NCERT claims that "The textbook does not deny the importance of Arya as a marker of identity", they are admitting that it is an important marker of identity. And yet, they have not bothered to explain its meaning. The term "does not deny" is a strawman because denial does not have to be explicit. The mere fact that they have used the term without explaining it amounts to denial of its importance.

NCERT response 6(b):
• *There is no dispute that within the Buddhist tradition and elsewhere the term Arya is used in the sense of noble.*

Evaluation of NCERT's response:
Thanks a lot.
NCERT response 6(c):
• *The third contention of the petitioners is that the Dasyus were defined in terms of misdeed rather than differences in ritual practices. The following reference is relevant to the context:*

Come, Maghavan, Friend of Man, to aid the singer imploring thee in battle for the sunlight

Speed him with help in his inspired invokings: down sink the sorcerer, the prayerless Dasyu. [Rgveda, II.XVI.9, Griffith]

Evaluation of NCERT's response:
If this is the translation which the NCERT authors relied upon, then where is the term "people who did not perform sacrifices" and where is the term "Dasa" in it? Why have the original phrases "sorcerers" and "prayerless" been replaced?

NCERT response 6(d):
• *That the Dasyus may have spoken a different language is suggested by the following verse*

*Thou slewest noseless (anasa, which Sayan, 14*th *century commentator on the text interprets as mouthless, or voiceless and therefore unintelligibly speaking) Dasyus with thy weapon, and in their home o'erthrewest hostile speakers. [Rgveda, V.29.10, Griffith]*

Evaluation of NCERT's response:
This fallacy is called *Argumentum ad verecundiam* or argument from authority. Indian society is heavily indebted to SayanAcharya for the service he rendered to this society bycompilingVedic corpus during tumultuous times. However, it does not mean that he can be considered a final authority on its translation and interpretation. He himself does not claim to be so. Sanskritists know that Yaskacharya's Nirukt is the best source to decipher and understand Vedic Sanskrit. According to Yask – anyone who destroys or sucks (**nlq mi{k;s**) is called a Dasyu. Similarly, according to Dr Ramakant Angiras, etymologically, the term**vukl**has been derived from **v + ukl** which means without nose or noseless. It is too farfetched to stretch it from noseless mouthless voiceless unintelligible.
It could easily have been written as**v + ukl**, which would mean unstable as etymologically the term**vklu** whichmeans stability is derived from the root**vkl** from this etymology, **vukl**would mean dasyu who leads to instability. Even if this transmutation of noseless to unintelligible is to be accepted, the word "unintelligible" does not mean a "different language". The different meanings of the word unintelligible, given in dictionaries are

incomprehensible, indiscernible, slurred, inarticulate, garbled, stammered, muddled, jumbled, senseless, scrambled, enigmatic, meaningless, unfathomable, inscrutable, cryptic, obscure, incoherent, unclear, indistinct
Neither of them can be twisted to mean a person with a "different language".

NCERT's response 6(e):
• *It may be noted that nowhere in the textbook is it suggested that the Dasyus belonged to a different*

race. Linguistic differences are not cultural differences.

Evaluation of NCERT's response:
The manner in which NCERT authors are trying to divert the attention is known as 'fallacy of accent'. In this fallacy, the point that is being stressed is deliberatelychanged in order to shift the point of emphasis. Our primary objection in the petition was not on racial differences. It was on the perception being created that 'dasyu' was a different group of people. This perception has been created by NCERT books, where it is being suggested that the opposition ofAryas to Dasyus was due to a difference based on language or performing sacrifices. We objected to, and still object to, this faulty portrayal.
Moreover, the claim of NCERT that "nowhere in the textbook is it suggested that the Dasyus belonged to a different race" is wrong and misleading.According to Cambridge dictionary, a race means:

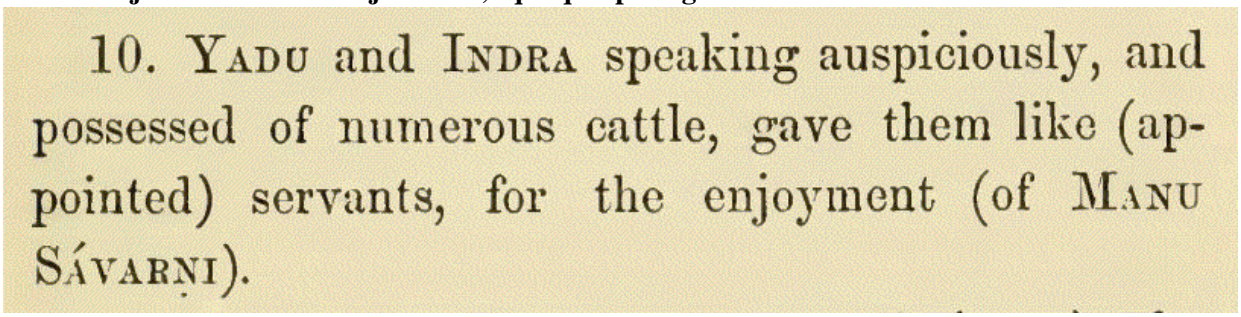
a group of people who share the same language, history, characteristics, etc.
From the Oxford dictionary:

A group of people sharing the same culture, history, language, etc
The NCERT books are blatantly seeding racial differences in minds of the students.

NCERT's response 6(f):
• *The petitioners do not cite any text in support of their assertion that 'dasa' means servant and not slave.*

Evaluation of NCERT's response:
This is an example of twin fallacy, one of them is generally referred to as Argumentum ex silentio, where silence is seen as an evidence. Secondly, the NCERT authors have used Onus probandi, in which the burden of proof is shifted on the opponent. We take this opportunity to rectify this omission on our part. HH Wilson was an Orientalist and linguist interested in Indic scriptures. He is credited with the first Sanskrit-English dictionary. He has also translated Vedas during colonial times. He has translated the term 'dasa' as 'servant'. Kindly read his translation of 10/64/10 or Rigveda.

mr nklk ifjfo"ks lefí"Vh xksijh.klk A ;nqLrqoZ'p ekegs AA



10. YADU and INDRA speaking auspiciously, and possessed of numerous cattle, gave them like (appointed) servants, for the enjoyment (of MANU SÁVARṆI).

Rigveda Sanhita by HH Wilson p. 167
Case – 4
Another objection that we had raised in the petition:– Objectionable assertion in NCERT books:

"Three gods are especially important: Agni, the god of fire; Indra, a warrior god; and soma, a plant from which a special drink was prepared."

p. 43, class 6th

Our objections:
Historically/literally incorrect assertion.According to Vedas, the one Paramatma has thousands of names in accordance with the plurality of his qualities and attributes. Thus the assertion of NCERT is based on incorrect information

In support, we had stated the often stated hymn from Rigveda 1/ 164/46
Indram mitram varuNam agnim ãhuh, atho divyahsa suparNo garutmãn,

ekam sad viprãh bahudhã vadanti, agnim yamam mãtarišvãnam ãhuh.

They hail Him as Indra, as Mitra, as VaruNa, as Agni, also as that divine and noble-winged Garutmãn. It is of One Existence that the wise ones speak in diverse ways, whether as Agni, or as Yama, or as Mãtarišvãn.

NCERT response 1(a):
• *It may be noted that the term paramatma is not mentioned in the verse cited by the petitioners. The term used is ekam sad (t). The term paramatma is therefore an insertion/matter of interpretation by Swami Dayananda Sarasvati.*

Evaluation of NCERT's response:
Coming from a national level institution like NCERT, such replies appear childish and amusing. This may be called unnecessary hair-splitting by the NCERT officials. If the discussion is to be taken at such levels, then the assertions in the textbooks of NCERT stand redundant as the term 'god' is not mentioned in any verse of Vedas. Therefore, when they claim that three gods were especially important, the term "gods" is an insertion/matter of interpretation by NCERT authors.

NCERT's response 1(b):
• *While the petitioners state that the 'paramatma' has thousands of names, original verse refers to 'bahudha' or many. In fact, this discrepancy is apparent from the text and translation cited by the petitioners themselves.*

Evaluation of NCERT's response: –
More hair-splitting. In our petition, we had stated, "According to *Vedas*, the one Parmatma has thousands of names". The *verse* was just an example to explain that although NCERT authors are statingAgni, Indra and Soma to be different gods, in fact, they are different names of the same Supreme Being. Readers should bear in mind that these are the same officials who have used interpretations of interpretations as facts when it suits them but in this case, they are naive enough to discard what is apparent.

NCERT's response 1(c):

• *It may be noted that Swami Dayanand Sarasvati lived in 19*th *century and therefore his translation and interpretation is as modern as any of the others relied on by contemporary scholars. Also, Swami Dayanand Sarasvati communicated his interpretations through the medium of print and paper. Both the technologies of printing and the manufacture of paper were initially developed in China and were adopted in India centuries after they were developed, coming to India from Europe, Central and West Asia. There is nothing wrong in adopting and adapting technologies from outside India along with making our own inventions and discoveries. Swami Dayananda Sarasvati, like all successful reformers, adopted this mode of communication.*

Evaluation of NCERT's response:
This fallacy is called Ignoratio elenchi, which implies that the argument put forward may be correct in itself but it is irrelevant or it does not answer the question.
We thank NCERT for the enlightening information on the spread of "technologies of printing and the manufacture of paper", but, can we please stay on the merit of the case?

NCERT's response 1(d, e, f):
• *The Rgveda as available at present consists of 1028 hymns. An index of these hymns is available in R.T.H. Griffith, hymns of the Rgveda, New Delhi, Motilal Banarasidass, revised edition edited by Prof. B.L. Shastri, in 1973, reprint 1991, pp. 657-676. All further references to the text are from this revised edition.*

• *It may be noted that the text consists of ten mandalas or sections. Of this the entire ninth mandala is devoted to Soma. This consists of 144 hymns, i.e. 1/ 10*th *of the total.*

• *Secondly, if we consider the first mandala as a sample, as it consists of 191 hymns, there are 40 hymns addressed exclusively to Agni…and 43 hymns exclusively addressed to Indra…Therefore, approximately 1/5*th *of the hymns are addressed to each of these deities, apart from them being mentioned in other hymns.*

As such, the statement in the textbook is substantiated and is neither historically nor literally incorrect. While the text occasionally equates the deities with one supreme reality, as suggested by the verse cited by the petitioners, we also have, as is evident from the above sample, where they are ***conceptualized*** *as distinct entities. It may be added that the text nowhere asserts the superiority/inferiority of either monotheism or polytheism as such evaluations are not part of the stated objectives.*

Evaluation of NCERT's response:

The NCERT authors have proved our point by accepting that the "text occasionally equates the deities with one supreme reality".

Case – 5

The objection number 20, 38 and 39, that we had raised in the petition have a common theme and the reply by NCERT has also clubbed these three points, therefore we are also putting these objections and the response simultaneously.

Objectionable assertion in NCERT books:

As we will see (pp. 62 – 66), rulers also tried to demonstrate their power and resources by building large temples. So, when they attacked one another's kingdoms, they often chose to target temples, which were sometimes extremely rich. In the next paragraph on the same page, regarding Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni, the textbook says that – His targets were wealthy temples.

p. 21, class 7th

Our objection
Biased/Incorrect assertion. Not based on historical and scientific facts.

There no supporting historical instances for this false assertion.
The practice of destroying Hindu temples was/is an Islamic practice. Therefore, the destruction of temples was considered a religious duty by Muslim rulers and wealth of temples was not a cause for it. Mahmud Ghazni's own statements testify this. Had his objective been wealth, he would have accepted the offer of Brahmans to give him large amount of money for desisting from breaking the idol of Somnath temple.

Objectionable assertion in NCERT books:
Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni was a contemporary of Rajendra I. During his campaigns in the subcontinent he also attacked the temples of defeated kings and looted their wealth and idols. Sultan Mahmud was not a very important ruler at that time. But by destroying temples – especially the one at Somnath – he tried to win credit as a great hero of Islam. In the political culture of the middle ages most rulers displayed their political might and military success by attacking and looting the places of worship of defeated rulers.

p. 66, class 7th Our objection:
Biased/incorrect assertion. Not based on scientific and established historical facts.
Mischievous placement of King Rajendra I with Mahmud in the same paragraph.

King Rajendra I had not destroyed even a single temple, but he is being compared with Mahmud to show as if his iconoclasm had nothing to do with the Islamic ideology. In fact, King Rajendra was responsible for construction of many magnificent temples during his reign while Mahmud was responsible for only destruction of temples.

Objectionable assertion in NCERT books:
In what ways do you think the policies of Rajendra I and Mahmud of Ghazni were a product of their times?

p. 66, class 7th Our objection

Biased/incorrect assertion. Not based on scientific historical facts. Misrepresentation of facts and malice on the part of authors in presenting these misconstrued facts. There is not a single instance where Rajendra I killed unarmed, innocent people just because they belonged to a different religion. Neither did he demolish any temples or idols. Nor did he enslave any human being during his entire life.

Contraryto this, Ghazni was an iconoclast and zealous Jihadi whose sole objective was to decimate Hindus. In the process, he demolished temples, broke idols, sent them to Ghazni, Mecca and Medina to be trodden under the feet of Muslims and enslaved hapless women and children, as per Islamic injunctions.

All the three objections relate to Mahmud of Ghazni iconoclasm and his faulty comparison with King Rajendra.

NCERT's response 20, 38 & 39:
The objection to the cited passage – that temples demonstrated the power and resources of the kings who built them and that is the reason why medieval rulers targeted the temples of rival rulers can be substantiated by innumerable references. Consider the gold statue of Vishnu which was once in the Lakshmana temple of Khajuraho. The statue actually belonged to the rulers of Kangra, it was taken by

the Pratiharas and finally by the Candell ruler Yasovarman just before 950 CE (and a near contemporary of Mahmud Ghazni). The inscription in the foundation stone of the Khajuraho Laksmana temple commemorated these events and stated – "With his troops of elephants and horses, Herambapala (Pratihara, ruler of Kanauj) seized it form [the king of Kangra]. Obtaining it from his son, the (Pratihara) prince Devapala, the illustrious (Candella) king Yasovarman – an ornament among kings and a crusher of enemies – performed the ritual establishment of [Vishnu] Vaikuntha [in the Laksmana temple at Khajuraho]". See, F. Kielhorn. "Inscriptions from Khajuraho", Epigraphica Indica, vol. 1 (1892), p. 192. From a different cultural zone note also the example of the conflict between the soldiers of the Gauda (Bengal) ruler and the ruler of Kashmir, Lalitaditya. The episode concerns the moment when the Bengali rulers chose to attack the idol of Vishnu Parihasakesava who was providentially saved because the soldiers mistook this image of the royal God for another. The Rajatarangini notes – "Though the king was abroad, the priests observed that the soldiers wanted to enter, and they closed the gates of the Parihasakesava shrine. Aroused with boldness, the soldiers got hold of the silver Ramasvamin image, which they mistook for Parihasakesava. They carried it out and ground it into dust. And even as Lalitaditya's troops who had come out from the city were kiling them at each step, the Gaudas continued to break it into particles and scatter them in every direction." See Ranjit Sitaram Pandit, trans., Rajatarangini, The saga of the Kings of Kashmir, Allahabad: The Indian Press, 1935, pp. 326-28. It is important to note that the text book ascribes no pejorative sentiments to the practice of looting or desecrating idols, sentiments that we may attach to a similar activity in the modern world today. Instead the student is asked to contemplate a world different from their own – a medieval, not a modern world, where, just as the construction of temples by rulers was regarded as a culturally commendable act, so too was the looting of the site of worship of a vanquished ruler…

There is no ambiguity about the fact that in the 10th and 11th century it was the Arabic and Persian histories produced in the court of Mahmud of Ghazni that detailed the importance of the sacredness of the Somnath temple and the greatness of the Sultan as its destroyer. For details on Somnath and Mahmud of Ghazni see Romila Thapar, Somanath: The Many Voices of History, (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2004). Mahmud of Ghazni's rhetorical strategy was not unique – it was congruent with the political culture of the time. Medieval monarchs often brandished their greatness by publicly proclaiming how they vanquished rival monarchs and destroyed their great monuments. This was not restricted to monarchs who happened to be Muslim, and to elaborate this point the following examples were deliberatively selected from the period of the Cholas, roughly approximate to Mahmud Ghazni (998-1030):

• Regarding the looting of the Chalukyan temples by the Chola king Rajadhiraja (r. 1018-1054) where idols were plundered and removed. Note the inscription on the door-guardian to the Chalukyan royal temple which was inscribed by the Chola ruler on the statue when it was removed from its original site and placed as the door guardian to the Chola royal temple: "This is the door-guardian brought by Lord Vijayarajendradeva (title appropriated by Rajadhiraja) after burning Kalyanapuram (the capital of the Chalukyas)."

• In the epigraphic account of Virarajendra Chola's (1063-1069) victory over a Chalukya opponent at the battle of Kiutalcankamam, the inscription noted: 'Virarajendraha halted his hot, impetuous elephant and donned the garland of victory. He plucked out his opponent's wives, the family treasure, his conches, his fringed white paraso, his trumpets, his war drum, his canopy, his white yak-tail fans, the banner of the boar, the crocodile gateway, "Blossom" the female elephant, a herd of war elephants, and troop of prancing horses. Amidst shouts of praise, he put on the victory crown adorned with splendid red jewels'. (E. Hultzsch, 'Inscriptions in the pasupatisvara Temple at Karuvur.' South Indian Inscriptions, vol. 3, (1899), pp. 31-39). The inscription goes on to note how Virarajendra

placed the looted objects on display in his own capital for his subjects to view… "Seated on a throne of bright jewels, King Virarajendra exhibited in orderly rows the great heaps of treasures he had seized in the Vengi territory, while all the kings on earth did homage at his feet and praised him". See, E. Hultzsch, "Inscriptions at Manimangalam.'. South Indian Inscriptions, vol. 3 (1899), pp. 64-71.

• Note also the campaigns of the Chola king Rajadhiraja in 1045, against his Chalukya foes led by Somesvara I (r. 1042-1068). Rajadhiraja routed the enemy forces at the battle of Puntiur, forced Somesvara to flee, and then continued north to burn the Chalukya capital of Kalyani. He then performed a Heroic Consecration ceremony and assumed the new royal title of Vijayarajendra, the 'Victorious Rajendra'. Returning from this successful campaign, Rajadhiraja transported a massive black stone door-guardian nearly 500 miles to his own capital at Gangaikondacolapuram, where he displayed it as a trophy of war and had it incised with an identifying inscription stating that he had seized it when burning the Chalukya capital.

• Finally consider the new capital of the Cholas, Gangaikondacholapuram, the 'city of the Cola king who took the Ganga', built by Rajendra I, ca 1030. Presiding over the city was a new Kailasa-like imperial Siva temple, the Brhadiswara temple. Rajendra furnished the city and the temple with objects and images seized in the course of his conquests: from the Chalukyas, a Sun-pedestal, several images of Durga, and a Ganesha image; from the Eastern Chalukyas, a resting Nandi, Siva's bull mo'nt; from the Kalingas of Orissa, three large stone images of Bhairava and Bhairavi and an awesome eight-armed Kali image; from the Palas of Bengal, a bronze image of Siva dancing on Nandi's back. See S.R.Balasubrahmanyam, Middle Nandi's back. See S.R.Balasubrahmanyam, Middle 1070 A.D., (Faridabad: Thomson Press, 1975); R.Nagaswamy, Gangaikondacholapuram, (Madras Government Museum, Madras: Government of Madras, n.s. No. 9. (1964).

• Historians are also sensitive to the fact that the rhetorical claims of the different monarchs were often refashioned in later literature. Mahmud of Ghazni was described in ways somewhat different ways in the Sultanate and Mughal chronicles. From the Mughals note the reading of Badauni that presents Mahmud of Ghazni as an unusually inclusive monarch and not an iconoclast. See Ali Anooshahr, 'Mughal historians and the Memory of the Islamic Conquest of India', IESHR, vol. 43 (2006), pp. 275-300, and for a detailed study of the processes involved in the shaping of new readings and identity associated with the family of Mahmud of Ghazni, see Shahid Amin, Conquest and Community: the Afterlife of Warrior Saint Ghazi Miyan, (Delhi: Orient Blackswan, 2015).

Evaluation of NCERT's response:
The response of NCERT runs into four A-4 size pages and must have been prepared by the best brains at the disposal of the Council. This batteryof intellectuals could muster seven instances of so called "iconoclasm" to prove their contention that such acts were mundane during medieval ages, irrespective of the faith of the kings. A few things are worth noting here:

• The NCERT officials have failed to cite even a single example of breaking or destruction of a temple by any of the non-Muslim kings.

• Not a single instance has been given in which a Muslim king destroyed a mosque of a rival king. Had the aim been to humiliate the defeated opponent, then the same yardstick needs to be applied for rivalry between different Muslim kings. If temples "*demonstrated the power and resources of the kings who built them*", then the same logic is applicable to mosques also. Is there a single instance where Babur destroyed a mosque constructed by Lodhi?

• Out of the six instances two are not even regarding idols of deities. They are regarding removal of "doorguardians". Removal of a door-guardian from the territory of a vanquished king and taking it to his own capital has been presented as a *proof* of iconoclasm, which can be considered equivalent to the destruction of a universally revered idol.
• Not a single instance, historical or otherwise, has been presented that tells us that iconoclasm was condoned by victors or their supporters. This is in direct contrast with the Islamic theologians who sing paeans of the likes of Mahmud, Khilji, Tughlaq and Aurangzeb for their zeal to destroy Indic temples and shrines.

• Out of the six instances cited by NCERT luminaries, there is only one instance where an idol was broken by Gaudas. In all the other cases, the idols are carried to be installed in magnificent temples of the victor. On closely examining even this one instance, the fundamental difference between Hindu and Islamic moral ethics comes to the fore. In this translation of Rajatarangini, Richard H Davis explains this difference.

However, Hindu narratives and inscriptions do not often describe destruction of images as a directed, politicallymeaningful act. When theydo, theymost often treat it as an extraordinary action, something morallyambiguous that maybe justified onlyin the extreme situations…

Since this instance is interesting part of history, we take liberty to reproduced it at some length, for the benefit of readers.

The great eighth centuryKashmiri ruler Lalitaditya, according to Kalahana's reckoning, was for the most part a high-minded monarch, but he was also capable of duplicityin the service ofimperial policy. Once, after making a promise of safe conduct to the king of Gauda (Bengal), and offering as surety (madhyastha, lit. "Intermediary") on his pledge the image of Visnu Parihasakesava, Lalitaditya treacherously ordered the ruler assassinated. Such a brazen act clearly departed from all standards of proper royal conduct, and called for revenge. As we might expect by now, the reprisal was directed not at the perpetrator of the deed but at its intermediary. A troop of the murdered kings' dedicated attendants snuck into Kashmir, posing as pilgrims, and made their waytowards the temple of Parihasakesava.

Now, Parihasakesava was not just anyimage. After Lalitaditya's successful conquest of the directions in the mid-eighth century, making him the premier ruler of north India, he returned to Kashmir and established a new capital at the confluence of the Vitasta and Sindhu rivers, Parihasapura. In and around the new capital, Lalitaditya and his retinue established a number of shrines, but the dominant one was sarvatobhadra ("auspicious in every direction") temple dedicated to Visnu Parihasakesava. A four-doored sarvatobhadra temple was considered the highest form of temple structure, and the immense silver Parihasakesava who stood at its centre was an image of Visnu Vaikuntha, the cosmic overlord whose four visages facing in the cardinal directions representedVisnu's four primary emanations. This was the principal ruling image of the empire Lalitaditya had established, and to attack it was to threaten the very centre of that polity.
Outside the temple the Gauda soldiers mustered, preparing to destroythe imperial image. Fortunately for Lalitaditya, however, the priests of Parihasakesava were a vigilant lot, and the Gauda image raiders were not well acquainted with the fine points of Kashmiri images. "Though the king was abroad," Kalahana relates, "the priests observed that the soldiers wanted to enter, and they closed the gates of the Parihasakesava shrine. Aroused with boldness, the soldiers got hold of the silver Ramasvamin image, which they mistook for Parihasakesava. They carried it out and ground it into dust. And even as Lalitaditya's troops who had come out from the city were killing them at each step, the Gaudas

continued to break it into particles and scatter them in every direction. Lalitaditya had excavated the image of Ramasvamin, silver like Parihasakesava, some years earlier in a remote part of Kashmir. The king had it brought tothe capital, and a small stone shrine was built for it near the Parihasakesava temple. Thought supposed to be an ancient image (Lalitaditya claimed it had been established by Rama himself), it certainly did not possess the imperial grandeur of Parihasakesava. As clearly indicated by the shrine housing it, Ramasvamin occupied a position subordinate to the imperial image of Visnu within the hierarchy of Kashmiri divinities.

By this token, the raid of the Gauda avengers was a botched affair. Theyfailed to destroyLalitaditya's central ruling image, the image that had stood as deceitful assurance of their own king's security, and they mistakenly crushed a lesser icon. But this is not the moral Kalhana draws from the incident. Rather, he chooses to praise the extraordinary devotion the raiders showed to their former lord. "The showers of their blood illuminated their uncommon devotion to their lord…utter devotional commitment to a lord (whether human or divine) may in certain circumstances transcend normal moral evaluation. Where the provocation is great, devotion maytransmute normallyimmoral acts into exemplaryones. The Gauda raiders, however, were not the only ones to demonstrate loyalty to their superior. "When those Gauda demons (raksasas) brought destruction," Kalahan concludes, "the holy Parihasakesava, the king's favored image, was protected through the sacrifice of Ramasvamin. Images too are capable of bhakti toward their lords[1].

The mere fact that idol breakers are being referred to as demons tells the difference between the ethics of Indic traditions viz-a-viz Islamic traditions in which Prophet Muhammad, who broke idols in Kaba, is considered ideal human being. This difference is exactlywhat NCERT authors are trying to obfuscate.

• They want us to read the works composed during Mughal era and even works of 2006 and 2015 for a better understanding of Mahmud Ghaznavi.According

[1] (R.H.Davis, 1999, pp. 83-85)

to their argument,Al-Beruni, who came with Mahmud, is not a reliable source but works written centuries later will give us a better understanding because the august NCERT historians are sensitive to some aspects. The aspects which do not suit their agenda. And it is these very historians who have been repeatedly vehemently opposing us on the grounds that at some places we used texts from "different era" and have even gone to the extent of labelling it as a strategy. For example, while objecting to our contentions in their reply, they have stated:

• *It is surprising that the petitioners cite Alberuni's 11th century work in order to corroborate their assertion. Given their stated objection to citing works from different periods/ eras to substantiate historical arguments, we fail to understand why they resort to this strategy.*

• *It is surprising that the petitioners choose to rely on a 17th century text in order to justify the role of the wife in rituals. This is not particularly relevant.*

• *Reliance is once more placed on the 11th century text of Alberuni, which, once again, by the petitioner's own yardsticks, is not particularly relevant in terms of the period and area under consideration in this chapter and section.*

• *Once again it is puzzling that the only substantiating evidence that the petitioners draw on for their objection is the 17th century autobiography of the Mughal emperor Jahangir. This cannot be considered relevant for the period under consideration in the chapter.*

In effect, what the NCERT officials want us to read the versions, slants and opinions of the historians and authors who are reliable according to *them*. Their arrogance probably stems from the authoritarianpositions theyhave been enjoying for long periods of time. The ex-cathedra tone tells us that they are not used to being challenged by mere mortals like us.

Case – 6
The objection number 17 that we had raised in the petition was about depicting Christianity and Islam as egalitarian religions.

Objectionable assertion in NCERT books:
Like Christianity, Islam was a religion that laid stress on the equality and unity of all before Allah, the one Supreme god.

p. 120, class 6th Our objection:

The statement is contrary to facts, and goes against the basic tenets of these two religions.
A fundamental tenet of both religions is the division between believers and non-believers (kafirs/infidels); As per Quran, Allah does not consider Muslims and non-Muslims as equal. The same applies to the biblical god Yahweh/Jehova.

NCERT's response 17:
The petitioners do not take into account the excerpt from the Quran that is included on the very same page that they cite (p.120), which highlights the equality between men and women in the text.

Evaluation of NCERT's response:

This informal fallacy is referred to as 'appeal to the stone', in which a claim is dismissed as absurd without providing any evidence of its absurdity.

In this case, the annexures presented as supporting evidence were from Quran and Bible. We had quoted:

Bible (Deuteronomy 13, Numbers 21 and 1 Chronicles 21) Qur'an (Chapter 9) Verses 1, 3, 4, 7, 14, 15, 17 – 20, 26, 29, 34, 39, 40, 46, 52, 63, 67, 68, 74, 79, 80, 85, 90, 96, 107, 111,

We are sure that the learned NCERT authors and officials have access to these scriptures. We would have liked their enlightened views on these verses of the "holy" books by them. They have thoroughly analyzed our supporting documents for other objections in the writ petition but in this case they have remained silent for obvious reasons. The readers should bear in mind that the documents we have cited are just illustrative in nature. We have given some evidence in 6th Chapter of the book. We desist from any further elaboration to avoid being repetitive and also due to constraint of space.

Case – 7

The objection number 160 that we had raised in the petition was about deliberatelysowing seeds of separation between various Indic traditions.

Objectionable assertion in NCERT books:

Relations with other traditions, such as Buddhism or Jainism, were also often fraught with tension if not open conflict.

p. 142, class 12th Our objection:
The major conflict was with Islam, which does not have even a passing reference in the books.
Supporting documents presented by us
Pp 246 of E and D, volume 2 (KAMILU-T TAWARIKH by IBN ASIR),

Pp 437, 438 of Tuzuki Jahangiri
RELEVANT EXRACT supplied to the NCERT

p. 246 of KAMILUT TAWARIKH by IBN ASIR, in E & D, volume 2

"The town was reduced to extremities, and God prevailed over it in the same year. The people were forbidden to worship the Budd, which the Muhammadans burned. Some of the people were burned, the rest were slain, and twenty Musulmans perished in testimony of their faith."

TUZUKI JAHANGIRI
p. 437
"At this stage news came that Man Singh Sewra had surrendered his soul to the lords of hell. The account of this in brief is that the Sewras are a tribe of infidel Hindus who always go with their head and feet bare.

One set of them root out their hair, their beards, and moustaches, while another set shave them. They do not wear sewn garments, and their central principle is that no living creature should be injured. The Banyans regard them as their pirs and teachers, and even worship them."

p. 438 "The sect of the Sewras exists in most of the cities of India, but is especially numerous in Gujarat. As the Banyans are the chief traders there, consequently the Sewras also are plentiful. Besides making idol-temples for them, they have built houses for them to dwell in and to worship in. In fact, these houses are the headquarters of sedition. The Banyans send their wives and daughters to the Sewras, who have no shame or modesty.

All kinds of strife and audacityare perpetrated bythem. I therefore ordered that the Sewras should be expelled, and I circulated farmans to the effect that wherever there were Sewras in my empire they should be turned out."

NCERT's response 159 – 160:

This is a continuation of the debates generated by the ideas of the "little" and "great tradition" which has now progressed considerably beyond its original proponents. In the context of Medieval History see for example Kunal Chakrabarti, Religious Processes: The Puranas and the Making of a Regional Tradition, (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2001). These debates have now been influenced by theoretical inputs from a variety of other scholars working in different histories and time periods.

Evaluation of NCERT's response:

The NCERT authorities/authors have not responded to this point. In fact, they have crafted their reply in such a way that a casual reader might even miss this glaring omission. They have smartly clubbed point numbers 159 and 160. Strictlyspeaking, this strategywould not fall under anyfallacy. It can be just called a whitewash.

A lot of stress is laid in NCERT books about the differences between various Indic traditions. These differences are depicted as hostility to create and widen imaginary chasms and fault lines. The truth, however, is that the different Indic traditions have survived and thrived in India. None of these traditions or ideologies is exclusivist. They are in direct contrast with the Abrahamic creeds, which are based on exclusivism. Yet, a coterie of historians has subverted the truth and presented a picture that is opposite to the historical facts. The above case is a suitable example to highlight this inversion of truth.

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VKS/HTB/0603/121112

The Public Information Officer,

Department of Education in Social Sciences,

NCERT

New Delhi

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Subject: Information under 'Right to information Act'

The undersigned is interested in seeking the information regarding the textbooks under the above mentioned act. The requisite fees of INR 10\- is attached herewith vide Postal order no. 03F 000279, dated 10/11/2012.

This is with reference to the para number 1 on page number 46 of NCERT History textbook for class 6th, named OUR PASTS – 1, titled 'Cattle, horses and chariots'.

From the 4th line onwards, it states that

'Battles were also fought for land, and then it states that:

'Some battles were fought for water, and to capture people'.

Kindly provide the following information regarding the above text:

1. All the verses which state that battles were fought for land, water and capture people.
2. Name(s) of the persons who had put forward the proposal for inducing the above mentioned sentences in textbook.
3. Certified copies of those verses from the book/Vedas which were used by the persons mentioned in point 2, to arrive at the above mentioned claim.
4. Name(s) of the persons who had vetted the proposal mentioned above
5. On what basis has it been established that hymns were learnt by 'men' only.

Sincerely,

(NEERAJ ATRI)

DATED – 12/11/2012

Annexure I

Annexure II

राष्ट्रीय शैक्षिक अनुसंधान और प्रशिक्षण परिषद्

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND TRAINING

Speed Post 15

P.No.13-2/2012-13/DESS/RTI /136
Department of Education in Social Sciences

7 December 2012

Prof. Hemraj Yadav
Head of the Department
&
Public Information Officer

Sub - Information under RTI Act 2005 sought by Sh. Neeraj Atri, Haryana -reg.

Dear Sh. Atri,

Please refer to your application under RTI dated 12/11/2012 forwarded by RTI Cell, NCERT which was received in this office on 22.11.2012.

In this connection you are informed that:

Ans.1 Apart from the text as mentioned in the book no other information in this regard is available in the official files of the Department.

Ans.2 The decision was that of the concerned author of the theme and the Textbook Development Committee.

Ans. 3 Apart from the text as mentioned in the book no other information in this regard is available in the official files of the Department.

Ans.4 The textbook was approved by the National Monitoring Committee Chaired by Prof. Mrinal Miri. This information has also been given in 'Foreword' to the textbook (page of photocopy enclosed).

Ans.5 Apart from the text as mentioned in the book no other information in this regard is available in the official files of the Department.

Yours sincerely

Hemraj Yadav
Professor / Head
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Encls: As above

Sh. Neeraj Atri